ABSTRACT

**Honoring Christ, Subverting Caesar:
Relevance-historical Reconstruction of the Context of Ephesians
as an Honorific Discourse Praising Jesus the Great Benefactor**

Context is foundational in the exegesis and interpretation of a biblical text; but for the letter to the Ephesians, it poses a challenge instead: it appears to be elusive, is considered inexplicable, and even presumed lost. Current methods of biblical interpretation have not sufficiently or systematically applied pragmatics to locate the context of a text. Despite various approaches employed to study Ephesians, current proposals for its context only pertain to certain parts of the letter and/or are ignorant of the discourse's participation in the first-century convention of honoring benefactors. This dissertation's original usage of Relevance Theory (RT) to examine the whole of Ephesians argues how the discourse explicatures honoring Jesus Christ as the Great Benefactor activate *relevant* political-religious honors of the Roman emperors that implicate the subversion of the Caesars. RT provides the methodical steps necessary to reconstruct Ephesians' context, or *shared cognitive environment*, between Paul and his audience. First, advancing the claim of Frederick W. Danker and the works of Holland L. Hendrix and Fredrick J. Long that Ephesians fits in the honorific genre, this dissertation goes beyond them by explicating the letter's distinct structure, honorific words and content, and thematic "word-deed" patterns that are not yet observed or identified. These features comport with first-century honorific documents and contribute to the letter's motif of honor and dishonor. They support the proposal that Ephesians is an epistolary honorific discourse.

Subsequently, based on RT's *principles of relevance*, I argue that the voluminous, repetitive, dense, amplified, and strategically located explicatures honoring Christ trigger honorific concepts of his benefactions, authority, and roles and profile. Christ has accomplished great benefactions for the church and for humankind. God the Father, the Supreme Benefactor, bestowed on him the highest honor and authority, while Paul honors him by explicating his honorific roles and profile. Moreover, because the Caesars were known ubiquitously in history as the Roman Empire's great political benefactors and had received divine honors, the honorific concepts of Christ *efficiently* activate similar honors of the Caesars as relevant ad-hoc concepts. In this way, Paul, being cognizant of the common function of honorific documents to legitimize the powers of ruling elites, purportedly praised Jesus at the expense of the Caesars. Simultaneously and implicitly, Paul's explicit praises for Christ demoted and subverted the Caesars. The *efficacy* and *plausibility* of this implicature encouraged the faith of Paul's audience and the early church to boldly live holy and righteous lives as witnesses to the transforming power of Christ against the immorality pervasive in their day and constituted an opposition to the Empire. Consequently, the efficiency and efficacy of the Caesars' honors for interpreting the explicatures honoring Christ in Ephesians fulfill the audience's search for *optimal relevance and satisfaction*. I therefore conclude the Greco-Roman political-religious context that supplied these honors of the Caesars is the optimally relevant shared cognitive environment, i.e. the reconstructed context, of Ephesians.

Key words: Ephesians, context, relevance theory, relevance, pragmatics, efficiency, efficacy, cognitive environment, honorific discourse, benefactor,

benefaction, historical reconstruction, explicature, honor, Jesus Christ, implicature, subvert, Caesar.

HONORING CHRIST, SUBVERTING CAESAR:

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
AcBib	Academia Biblica
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AGROS	Accessible Greek Resources and Online Studies
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung.* Part 2, *Principat*. Edited by Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (Danker-Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich)
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BGBE	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
BHGNT	Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
ClQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CurTM	*Currents in Theology and Mission*
GHTS	GlossaHouse Hermeneutics & Translation Series
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JGRChJ	*Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*

JOP	*Journal of Pragmatics*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the study of the New Testament Supplement Series
L&N	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains.* 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989
LB	*Linguistica Biblica*
LBD	*The Lexham Bible Dictionary*
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon.* 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NET	New English Translation
NIDNTT	*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Edited by Colin Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–1978
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NOTA	Novum Testamentum et orbis Antiquus
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OT	Old Testament

PHI	Packhard Humanities Institute
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
RGDA	*Res Gestae Divi Augusti*
RRA	Rhetoric and Religion in Antiquity
RSQ	*Rhetoric Society Quarterly*
RT	Relevance Theory
SBLStBL	Society of Biblical Literature Studies in Biblical Literature
SCE	Shared Cognitive Environment
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
USQR	*Union Seminary Quarterly Review*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

Illustrations

Tables

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In biblical interpretation, it is important to consider the Scripture as a form of human communication: the author(s) having written down what is desired to be communicated to the addressees with a certain purpose in mind within a certain context or environment. In that regard, interpretation of an ancient text ought to be done semantically and pragmatically—the former dealing with the actual words and rules of grammar and the latter dealing with the text as an utterance and the context in which it occurs. Although this general way of dividing human communication may be considered "convenient" by some,[1] it is arguably a foundational perspective from which serious study and interpretation of ancient texts ought to begin. This is because retrieving the meaning of such extant documents should involve, among other things, the basic considerations of not just the meanings of words and phrases, but also the contexts in which these words and phrases are located. Careful considerations of the authors' situational purposes are also necessary and will in turn further inform the context. However, striking a balance between semantics and pragmatics is not easy. Peter Cotterell and Max Turner have identified: "In traditional biblical exegesis it has been customary to focus attention almost exclusively on semantics," notably "because of the assumed precision of such studies."[2]

[1] Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 11.

[2] Ibid., 13, 18. J. P. Louw has considered matters of background and history as only one of five parts of *extra-linguistic features* (including "time and place, typography, format, and medium of presentation") of a text,

Nevertheless, to achieve a level of understanding of the Scripture that is consistent with it being a form of human communication, we cannot neglect the work of pragmatics but must continue to develop its usage, and more importantly attempt to combine the applications of both semantics and pragmatics as much as possible.[3]

Pragmatics is a wide-ranging field.[4] Among recent linguistic and language textbooks, one finds this definition: "Pragmatics focuses on the use of language in particular situations; it aims to explain how factors outside of language contribute to both literal meaning and nonliteral

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which also consists of *para-linguistic features* ("punctuation, intonation, pause, speech acts, genre, discourse types, communication functions") and *linguistic features* ("word order, embedding, nominalization, levels of language, style, syntax and semantics") ("Reading a Text as Discourse," in *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis*, ed. David Alan Black et al. [Nashville: Broadman, 1992], 17–30). It is heartening to note that Louw has identified the emergence of pragmatic studies of a text through "studies on presupposition and inference in texts, on speech acts, on the relevance of utterances" (19).

[3] Fredrick J. Long rightly notes "We need to understand that words occur in context with other words in specific uses and that their sum total may often be greater than their individual contributions. In other words, the significance of words will extend beyond their singular dictionary glosses and meanings, because they work with other words around them for broader communicative effect. Word usage is strategic within discourses" (*Κοινὴ Γραμματική Koine Greek Grammar: A Beginning-Intermediate Exegetical and Pragmatic Handbook*, AGROS [Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2015], 11).

[4] Yan Huang, who has authored two texts on this subject, writes, "Pragmatics is one of the most vibrant and rapidly growing fields in contemporary linguistics and the philosophy of language" (*Pragmatics*, 2nd ed., Oxford Textbooks in Linguistics [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014], 1). This can be seen from the vast amount of subtopics and related studies covered in and by the many essays in many books and handbook series on pragmatics. The *Concise Encyclopedia of Pragmatics* lists more than 200 works related to pragmatics, of which Francisco Yu's essay on the Relevance theory is the most significant for this research (in Jacob L. Mey, ed, *Concise Encyclopedia of Pragmatics*, 2d ed. [New York: Elsevier, 2009]). The *Handbook of Pragmatics* series consists of nine separate volumes that discuss pragmatics of speech actions, pragmatics of discourse, cognitive pragmatics, pragmatics of society, interpersonal pragmatics, pragmatics across languages and cultures, historical pragmatics, and pragmatics of computer-mediated communication (Wolfram Baublitz, Andreas H. Jucker, and Klaus P. Schneider, eds, *Handbook of Pragmatics*, 9 vols. [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Mouton, 2010–14]). The *Handbook of Pragmatics Highlights* series has ten volumes each focusing on some of the most prominent issues and themes of the field like pragmatics, philosophy and logic; pragmatics in practice; cognition and pragmatics; pragmatics of interaction; discursive pragmatics; and grammar, meaning and pragmatics (Jef Verschueren and Jan-Ola Östman, eds, *Handbook of Pragmatics Highlights*, 10 vols. [Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2009–11]). The *Pragmatics & Beyond New Series* has up to 260 individual volumes of works today and continues to expand this base by accepting ongoing studies and researches of pragmatics by scholars (Anita Fetter and Andreas H. Jucker, eds, *Pragmatics & Beyond New Series* [Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1988–present]). It has a volume titled *Pragmatic Competence and Relevance*, centering on the use of Relevance theory in pragmatics. Finally, there is the *Advances in Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis* series, the bibliographical information of which I have yet to be able to locate.

meaning which speakers communicate using language."[5] As such, the interest of pragmatics is in viewing a statement not so much only as a sentence, i.e. "a well-formed string of words put together by the grammatical rules of a language," but as "an utterance … spoken or written by a particular speaker or writer in a particular context on a particular occasion … a situated instance of language use which is partially contextually, culturally, and/or socially conditioned."[6] Context, therefore, is at the heart of pragmatics studies and is understood as "any relevant features of the dynamic setting or environment in which a linguistic unit is systematically used," and comprising of physical, linguistic, and general-knowledge settings.[7]

Within the field of biblical interpretation, Gene L. Green explains:

> The emerging field of lexical *pragmatics*, which explores the way word meaning is modified in use, and the notion of *ad hoc* concept formation provide useful and, indeed, essential perspectives for the interpretation of any communication, including the interpretation of biblical literature.[8]

For indeed, the Scripture as biblical literature is recognized to contain works across a number of literary genres, of which the epistolary letters in the NT are best demonstrated to be a form of

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[5] Paul Portner, "Meaning," in *An Introduction to Language and Linguistics*, ed. Ralph W. Fasold and Jeff Connor-Linton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 137–68. Stephen C. Levinson supplies a number of definitions based on the wide-ranging nature of the subject but are too varied to be presented here (*Pragmatics*, Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983], 5–35). Although Huang has written a textbook on pragmatics, his definition is too generalized for our use: "Pragmatics is the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language" (*Pragmatics*, 2). In addition, Portner writes that pragmatics "is fundamentally about how the context of use contributes to meaning, both semantic meaning and speaker's meaning," and its "core topics … are indexicality, presupposition, implicature, and speech acts, but in reality there is no limit to the ways in which context can influence meaning. Situations can even develop which allow words to mean things they never meant before" ("Meaning," 163).

[6] Huang, *Pragmatics*, 13.

[7] Ibid., 16. Physical context "refers to the physical setting of the utterance," linguistic context "refers to the surrounding utterances in the same discourse," and general-knowledge context is otherwise also known as "background," "common-sense," "encyclopedic knowledge," or "real-world knowledge context," which makes an utterance "pragmatically well-formed" or "pragmatically anomalous."

[8] Gene L. Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," *JETS* 50.4 (2007): 799–812.

human communication. A letter written by one party to another must aim to accomplish certain purposes. While the unique circumstances of both parties may be similar or different, and in some cases difficult to determine, some kind of environment or context must be common to both in order for the communication (the message and purpose of the letter) to be successful and understood.

It is also well known that a text without a context is only a pretext for misinterpretation. To avoid this, biblical scholars often study the texts of Scripture and the worlds and eras within which these texts are situated, including aspects of the society, history, religions, politics (etc.), before selecting the appropriate contexts that best correlate with the texts. However, Green has identified that "[c]ontext is viewed very broadly and imprecisely" and that there has been little guidance on "the means by which texts and contexts work together in communication and the principles which come into play to distinguish *which* contexts are appropriate in our reading of a text."[9] This is in harmony with Andrew T. Lincoln's observation prior his discussion of Ephesians' setting.[10] In my view, this lack of clarity could result in a variety of contexts being proposed or applied in the interpretation of a biblical discourse without a way to judge between

[9] Gene L. Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," in *The Linguist as Pedagogue: Trends in the Teaching and Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009), 217–40. This is problematic as context could refer to "'all that out there' beyond the specific text under consideration, including both the immediate literary context of the discourse (the 'co-text'), the larger literary corpus of a particular author, the body of biblical literature itself (the canon), as well as the cultural context shared by both the writer and the readers" (226).

[10] Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, WBC 42 (Dallas, TX: Word, 1990), lxxiv. He writes "In the case of most of the letters in the Pauline corpus, scholars have usually set about reconstructing the setting of the recipients by taking the explicit statements about and references to the situation being addressed, associating these with implications that can be drawn from the particular concerns and problems that are treated in the letter, and correlating this material with other available relevant historical, geographical, and social data about the place of the letter's destination."

them. Confusions and debates could ensue over different theological views and positions produced as a result. This is a problem encountered in Ephesians.

Furthermore, Green also notes that apart from literary, social, or NT world contexts, "[c]urrent trends in biblical interpretation point to the context of a book's reception history or the theological context in which we read Scripture."[11] A book's "reception history" comprises its history of interpretation since the early Church Fathers through centuries of studying and examination including the ever-increasing research in biblical scholarship today, and not only affects context but also authorship, genre, etc. At some time during this long duration, proposals of a book's context, authorship or genre could be made, gain acceptance over time and eventually become assumed to be the case by later scholars. This practice might not pose a big problem for a NT document that states its context or author explicitly, since scholars' interpretations could be checked against its textual evidences. However, for a book that is without an ostensibly written setting or author, the lack of internal evidences would render it helpless against all kinds of proposals, especially extreme ones. It would be difficult to judge the veracity of a new proposal against a long-assumed position. Later commentators could be at risk if the newly popularized proposal were to become widely accepted as true, simply because it has now over time become part of the book's reception history.[12] A classic example of this danger concerns the authorship of Ephesians. Although Pauline authenticity of the book had been accepted for fifteen centuries, it came under challenge during the time of F. C. Baur that resulted

[11] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 226–27.

[12] N. T. Wright correctly raises the issue that the task of exegetes is to examine a biblical text toward readings that might yet be explored, not merely to agree to all of its reception history (*Paul: In Fresh Perspective* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005], 61). However, the point here is that a text vague in context or authorship could be in greater danger of more extreme explorative interpretations than one that is not.

in many scholars progressively accepting the new position of non-Pauline authorship. Thus, clarifying the context of a book, more specifically doing so for a discourse that does not explicitly state its context, with the active inclusion of pragmatics as guiding methodology, is of critical importance and the interest of this research. With this, we turn our attention to the epistle to the Ephesians.

Ephesians in Critical Context

Ephesians can be considered one of the greatest of the Pauline works. Since the time of Chrysostom through to John Calvin in the sixteenth century and even until late in the twentieth century, this epistle has been described by numerous scholars as "the crown of St Paul's writings,"[13] the "quintessence of Paulinism,"[14] "exercising the most influence on Christian thought and spirituality,"[15] and "the epitome of Pauline thought."[16] Such acclaims for it are not surprising judging from the surplus of its contents relating to Christology, ecclesiology, soteriology, eschatology, pneumatology, reconciliation and unity, marriage and household relationships, etc. Its language of the grandeur and riches of God and its pleonastic style of writing with long sentences extended by genitival, relative or causal phrases are unique among the Pauline letters, and both baffle scholars regarding the meanings of these phrases and bolsters their interests for a better explanation.

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[13] J. Armitage Robinson, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians: A Revised Text and Translation with Exposition and Notes* (New York: MacMillan, 1903), vii.

[14] Arthur S. Peake, "The Quintessence of Paulinism," *BJRL* 4 (1917): 285–311; F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 424–40.

[15] Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 620.

[16] Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 2.

Amidst these praises, Ephesians has also come under intense scrutiny and examinations. Many scholars have applied a variety of methods to study its content, including historical-exegetical approach,[17] intertextual studies of the author's use of the OT,[18] rhetorical analysis,[19] purely semantic and structural analysis,[20] and exploratory usage of social entrepreneurship,[21] just to name a few. The greatest seismic shift in Ephesians scholarship could perhaps be attributed to F. C. Baur when he adopted the suggestion that it was not an authentic Pauline work as earlier generations of scholars since the Church Fathers had believed.[22] This view increasingly gained

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[17] Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of Its Historical Setting*, SNTSMS 63 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[18] Thorsten Moritz, *A Profound Mystery: The Use of the Old Testament in Ephesians*, NovTSup 85 (Leiden: Brill, 1996); W. Hall Harris III, *The Descent of Christ: Ephesians 4:7–11 and Traditional Hebrew Imagery*, AGJU 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Ronn A. Johnson, "The Old Testament Background for Paul's Use of 'Principalities and Powers'" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2004); Frank S. Thielman, "Ephesians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 813–33; Timothy G. Gombis, *The Drama of Ephesians: Participating in the Triumph of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010); Richard M. Cozart, *This Present Triumph: An Investigation into the Significance of the Promise of a New Exodus of Israel in the Letter to the Ephesians*, WEST Theological Monograph Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013).

[19] Roy R. Jeal, *Integrating Theology and Ethics in Ephesians: The Ethos of Communication*, Studies in Bible and early Christianity 43 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 2000); Ben Witherington III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

[20] Edna Johnson, *A Semantic and Structural Analysis of Ephesians*, Semantic and Structural Analysis Series (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2008).

[21] Minna Shkul, *Reading Ephesians: Exploring Social Entrepreneurship in the Text*, LNTS 408 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009).

[22] One cannot help but relate this to N. T. Wright's comments: "[S]uch consensus as there has ever been on the subject came from the time when the all-dominant power in New Testament scholarship lay with a particular kind of German existentialist Lutheranism for whom any ecclesiology other than a purely functional one, any view of Judaism other than a purely negative one, any view of Jesus Christ other than a fairly low Christology, any view of creation other than a Barthian 'Nein', was deeply suspect. The false either/or … of justification *or* the church, of salvation *or* creation, hovered as a brooding presence over the smaller arguments (which are in any case always unconvincing, given the very small textual base) from style. The extremely marked stylistic difference between 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians is far greater than that between … Romans and Ephesians, but nobody supposes for that reason that one of them is not by Paul. In particular, the assumption that a high Christology must mean later, and non-Pauline, authorship has been brought to the material, not discovered within it. And the argument recently advanced … that Ephesians and Colossians are secondary *because they move away from confrontation with the Empire to collaboration with it* is frankly absurd" (*Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, 18–19).

greater acceptance by many later scholars such that the scale today could be termed as balanced, with biblical scholarship virtually split over its Pauline authorship.[23] The debate further involves questions about its audience, dating, location, occasion and context, purpose and genre, language, rhetoric and style, impersonal nature, literary relationship with Colossians, the practice of pseudonymity in the first century, and the theological distinctions it portrays compared to that of the undisputed Pauline works.[24]

The specific interest of this research is in answering the question: *What could be the context that the author and audience(s) of Ephesians had relied on to communicate and process the discourse?* While it is desirous to solve this question as it pertains to the historical author and the original audience(s), it is more feasible to focus our efforts on the implied author and implied addressees that the text identifies. Lincoln judges that Ephesians "simply does not contain references to a specific setting or problems."[25] This view is sharpened a decade later by John Muddiman who claims definitively: "The trouble with Ephesians can be summed up quite simply: it has no setting and little obvious purpose!"[26] In my view, these charges should be reconsidered.

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[23] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 9–20.

[24] The depth and discussions of these issues have been covered extensively in many works like Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1–3*, AB 34 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), 3–59; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, xxxv–xcvii; Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 1–93; Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 1–82; John Muddiman, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, BNTC (London: Continuum, 2001), 2–54; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 20–114; Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 215–24; Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 1–30; Thomas M. Winger, *Ephesians*, Concordia Commentary (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2015), 1–163.

[25] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, lxxiv.

[26] Muddiman, *Epistle*, 12. He repeats this same position at least twice (20, 23).

Lincoln's observations of the text led him to oppose a *specific* setting for Ephesians. Indeed, he is dismayed that "[s]ome interpreters … [have] determined… despite the lack of evidence to discover a specific setting" for Ephesians and suggests that a "more appropriate" approach is "to respect the distinctiveness of this letter's lack of specificity by concentrating on the general implications of the letter itself and by being content with the correspondingly general contours of the setting that may be cautiously reconstructed."[27] Lincoln essentially agrees that the epistle has a setting but that according to his study it could at best be a general one, and concludes that any proposal for a specific context had better be well supported. His caution against forcing from the text what might not be present is valid, for such is the exegetical fallacy interpreters would occasionally make. However, we need not settle for "general implications" when a cognitively logical and textually faithful method to infer a specific one is available.

Muddiman's claim, on the other hand, pointedly disregards the problem altogether. Immediately after asserting his view, Muddiman substantiates "The lack of a specific setting and purpose explains the popularity of the 'circular letter hypothesis' among those who defend Pauline authorship."[28] The difficulty with Muddiman's assertion is that the problem of locating Ephesians' setting does not cease to exist. Even though Muddiman thinks the circular letter hypothesis "yet leaves much unexplained,"[29] the theory has not been used (to my knowledge) by scholars who claim Pauline authenticity to avoid addressing the problem of the letter's context.

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[27] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, lxxiv.

[28] Muddiman, *Epistle*, 12. Muddiman summarizes the hypothesis: "This is the view that the letter was not addressed to one congregation but to several, or to the whole network of Pauline churches…. Paul, awaiting martyrdom in a Roman gaol, would be speaking, as it were, *urbi, et orbi*, summoning the universal Church, enthroned with Christ and assured of salvation, to unity and holiness of life" (12).

[29] Ibid.

On the contrary, I believe most of them would strive to clarify or resolve the problem so as to strengthen their position.[30] One must not confuse the lack of occasion or problem in the letter with the problem of an unclear context of the letter. On the other hand, the circular letter theory is conceivably plausible since the textual issue regarding ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in 1:1 is very likely an addition to the original manuscript. Thus, Muddiman has not only failed to propose a solution, but has made a conclusion that is plausibly false. Considered from another angle however, his opinion reflects the mounting frustrations among scholars regarding the lack of a concrete context for Ephesians.

The research question about Ephesians' context is often enmeshed with other unresolved aspects of the discourse mentioned earlier. However, it is beyond this work to address them altogether. In view of their interconnectedness, a few working assumptions need to be made about the author, audience, and probable dating and locale of the writing.

Author. Who did the letter recipients think and believe to be the author? Although pseudonymous assertions of Ephesians are numerous, Harold W. Hoehner has demonstrated that they are not the majority in biblical scholarship.[31] I consider pseudonymity of Ephesians a modern construct arising from attempts to explain various difficult aspects of the discourse, namely (1) a supposed unique viewpoint of the writer (including a late-Paul view and impersonal approach); (2) the seemingly different theological emphases compared to the undisputed Pauline letters (such as a realized eschatology, universal ecclesiology); (3) the unique style, language and

[30] For example, Hoehner devotes twenty pages to discuss the geographical and historical setting (*Ephesians*, 78–97).

[31] Ibid., 9–20. Hoehner debunks Raymond Brown's "estimate that 80 percent of critical scholarship does not think that Paul wrote Ephesians" and shows, by tracing the decisions of scholars since the sixteenth century, that Pauline authorship is generally favored overall (54% compared to 39% against) while it is 50% between 1991 and 2001.

rhetoric in the epistle; and (4) its similarity with Colossians.[32] I find in these attempts an unwillingness to concede that these problems "could be accounted for by the historical Paul having to address a different situation than the situations encountered in the undisputed letters."[33] I agree with Witherington that, "the burden of proof must lie with those who argue that some of the later Paulines are not ultimately by Paul. Strong evidence of differences in both style and substance must be produced."[34] However, the evidences supporting the allegation that Ephesians is not written by Paul have not been sufficiently convincing to warrant it.

Based on the text alone, there are consistent explicit and implicit claims in Eph 1:1; 3:1, 3–4, 7–8, 13; 4:1; 6:20–22 that the author was the apostle Paul: the uses of Paul's name, apostolic office, situation as a prisoner, role of Christ's ambassador, and the descriptions of Paul's calling and stewardship of the mystery to minister and preach to the Gentiles. These claims would lead the audience(s) to think of no other persons than Paul himself as the implied author.[35] Even if someone other than Paul had written it, regardless of any possible reason,[36] the final result of writing in Paul's name is that the recipients would think and accept cognitively

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[32] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, lxii–lxviii; Best, *Ephesians*, 20–36. Witherington calls it "a theory [that] causes more problems than it solves" (*Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 223). Brown, on the other hand, asks a series of questions to justify pseudonymity (*Introduction to the NT*, 587–88).

[33] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, lxiii. I am applying this view broadly though Lincoln is referring to some theological emphases.

[34] Ben Witherington III, *The Paul Quest: The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998), 101.

[35] My view harmonizes with Lincoln's: "…the reader first of all meets the 'implied author.' The implied author is a construct evoked by the text and inferred and assembled by the reader from all the components of the text" (*Ephesians*, lx).

[36] Best suggests some explanations but they appear purely imaginative (*Ephesians*, 12–13). Witherington proposes that Timothy could have been Paul's scribe and might have played a part in the composition of Ephesians (*Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 25).

that Paul wrote it. As such, pseudonymity would not have changed the cognitive effect upon the recipients that the discourse was written by Paul and comprises Paul's views and purposes in response to historical situations during his lifetime. Thus, this work assumes that Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, is the implied author of Ephesians based on repeated internal textual evidences.

Probable Dating and Locale. The previous supposition that Paul is the author enables us to make assumptions about the probable dating and locale of the letter. The explicit statements that the author, the historical Paul, was the prisoner of Christ Jesus and of the Lord (3:1; 4:1), and in tribulation (3:13) allow us to situate the occasion of the writing to be during one of Paul's imprisonments. Furthermore, this imprisonment, being "for the sake of the Gentiles" (3:1) and "on your behalf" (3:13), could probably be the one following Paul's arrest that resulted from him bringing Gentiles into the Jerusalem temple (Acts 21:28–33). Scholars have proposed its possible locations, namely Rome, Caesarea Maritama, or Ephesus;[37] but it is not necessary for this work to dive into that arena to discuss which one is more likely. It would be sufficient here to situate the writing in the later part of Paul's ministry but before his death, and thus to date it between the late 50s and the early 60s CE, i.e. during the reign of emperor Nero.[38]

Audience. The audience is assumed to consist mainly of Gentile believers, with the presence of some Jewish Christians. Gentile believers are directly addressed in Eph 2:11–22 and 3:1–7, and implicitly in 4:17–24 and 5:3–12. The first two pericopes clearly specify "you"

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[37] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 92–97; O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 57–58; Fredrick J. Long, "Ephesians, Letter to The, Critical Issues," in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016)., Logos edition, Occasion and Date.

[38] Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 16, 24–25; Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," Logos edition, "Occasion and Date." This would delimit the possible periods of the Roman Empire for the discussions that follow.

(ὑμεῖς), in apposition to Gentiles, (ἔθνη, 2:11; 3:1). Doubts about the originality of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in the textual issue in 1:1 prompt the likelihood that Ephesians was circulated to churches around the region of Asia Minor predominantly occupied by Gentiles rather than sent to a fixed locale of Ephesus.[39] Thus, the majority of the audience would be comprised of Gentile believers.[40] On the other hand, Jewish presence cannot be dismissed.[41]

Research Thesis and Approach

Over the past two decades, the presence of a political context in various books of the NT, including Ephesians, have been progressively argued and presented by scholars such as Richard

[39] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 1–4; Best, *Ephesians*, 98–101; O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 84–87; Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 217–19. Contrary to Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 11, 67; Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic*, 5–6; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 78–79; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 12–16.

[40] Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 223; Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," Logos edition, "Letter Recipients." Although Nils Alstrup Dahl concludes that Ephesians is a pseudonymous letter and differentiates between its "fictional setting" (textual) and its "real setting," he nevertheless considers, "Ephesians, taken on face value, is written to Gentile Christians in Asia Minor with whom Paul for the first time makes contact by sending Tychikos and a letter to be delivered by him. Praising God, Paul congratulates the addressees who have now become Christians, reminding and exhorting them, and also telling them that their own existence as fellow members of the body of Christ is dependent upon the revelation which was given to Paul and the ministry which he has carried out" (*Studies in Ephesians: Introductory Questions, Text- & Edition-Critical Issues, Interpretation of Texts and Themes*, ed. D. Hellholm, V. Blomkvist, and T. Fornberg, WUNT 131 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000], "Ch. XVI The Letter to the Ephesians: Its Fictional and Real Setting," 453).

[41] Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 4–5, 216–17; Best, *Ephesians*, 1–6.

A. Horsley,[42] Warren Carter,[43] N. T. Wright,[44] Bruno Blumenfeld,[45] Neil Elliott,[46] James R. Harrison,[47] Michael Peppard, Joseph D. Fantin, Harry O. Maier, and Bruce W. Winter.[48]

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[42] Richard A. Horsley, ed., *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997); Horsley, ed., *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000); Horsley, ed., *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2004); Horsley, ed., *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul*, SemeiaSt 48 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004); Horsley, ed., *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008).

[43] Warren Carter, *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001); Carter, *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide*, Abingdon Essential Guides (Nashville: Abingdon, 2006); Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008).

[44] N. T. Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire," in *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 160–83; Wright, "Gospel and Empire," in *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 59–79; Wright, "Paul and Empire (2010)," in *Pauline Perspectives: Essays on Paul, 1978–2013* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 439–51; Wright, "The Eagle Has Landed: Rome and the Challenge of Empire," in *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 279–347; Wright, "The Lion and the Eagle: Paul in Caesar's Empire," in *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 1271–1319.

[45] Bruno Blumenfeld, *The Political Paul: Democracy and Kingship in Paul's Thought*, JSNTSup 210 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

[46] Neil Elliott, "Romans 13:1–7 in the Context of Imperial Propaganda," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 184–204; Elliott, "The Anti-Imperial Message of the Cross," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 167–83; Elliott, "Strategies of Resistance and Hidden Transcripts in the Pauline Communities," in *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul*, ed. Richard A. Horsley, SemeiaSt 48 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 97–122; Elliott, "The Apostle Paul's Self-Presentation as Anti-Imperial Performance," in *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2004), 67–88; Elliott, "The Apostle Paul and Empire," in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 97–116; Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire*, Paul in Critical Contexts (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008).

[47] James R. Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context*, WUNT 2/172 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Harrison, *Paul and the Imperial Authorities at Thessalonica and Rome: A Study in the Conflict of Ideology*, WUNT 273 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

[48] Michael Peppard, *The Son of God in the Roman World: Divine Sonship in Its Social and Political Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Joseph D. Fantin, *The Lord of the Entire World: Lord Jesus, a Challenge to Lord Caesar?*, New Testament Monographs 31 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011); Harry O. Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire: Imperial Image, Text and Persuasion in Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Bruce W. Winter, *Divine Honours for the Caesars: The First Christians' Responses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).

Recently, Fredrick J. Long convincingly argues for the plausibility of a Greco-Roman political-religious context in Ephesians through his meticulous research into Paul's political theology and topoi in the discourse.[49] Long situates his argument within ancient political theories (*politeiai*) of Plato and Aristotle which Paul is believed to have been exposed to and influenced by in his use of πολιτεία and συμπολῖται in Eph 2:12, 19 and his defense before the Sanhedrin in Acts 23:1.[50] Long draws a parallel between the likelihood that Paul wrote Ephesians as an "exile from the geo-political entity of historic Israel" following his arrest and imprisonment after Acts 23:1, and Cicero's writing of *De Re Publica* after the politician's exile from Rome a century earlier, which is steeped in "Greek political traditions of kingship … in broader circulation throughout the Mediterranean world" and which Caesar Augustus could well have "studied and was concerned to implement … in order to legitimate his position as *princeps*."[51] Long identifies a tremendous amount of "ancient political topoi in Ephesians, correlating them with ancient political thought and theory … and public artifacts of imperial propaganda (honorific inscriptions, temples, and coins) especially as located throughout Asia Minor in the first century."[52] Long also claims, with warrants from Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Works and Days*, Cicero's *De Natura*

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[49] K. Nijay Gupta and Fredrick J. Long, "The Politics of Ephesians and the Empire: Accommodation or Resistance?," *JGRChJ* 7 (2010): 112–36; Fredrick J. Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology in Greco-Roman Political Context," in *Christian Origins and Greco-Roman Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, Early Christianity in Its Hellenistic Context 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 254–309; Long, "Roman Imperial Rule under the Authority of Jupiter-Zeus: Political-Religious Contexts and the Interpretation of 'The Ruler of the Authority of the Air' in Ephesians 2:2," in *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History and Development*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, Linguistic Biblical Studies 6 Early Christianity in its Hellenistic Context 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 113–54; Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," Logos edition, Religious-Political Setting, Political Themes; Long, *Exploring Ephesians 1–3: Praise, Prayer, and Politics*, RRA (Chico, CA: SBL Press, forthcoming).

[50] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 258–62.

[51] Ibid., 265, 266.

[52] Ibid., 271.

Deorum and other ancient sources, that "Jupiter-Zeus was commonly associated with power and authority as well as 'air/aether' and as controlling events in the air."[53] In addition, reasoning from (1) the political context of Eph 1:22–2:22, (2) the grammatical and syntactical relations of 2:2b, (3) the uses of ἀρχή, ἄρχων, and ἐξουσία in the NT and Paul to indicate human rule, and (4) the Roman political ideology and literary and inscriptional associations of Jupiter-Zeus with the Roman Emperor, Long argues "The Roman emperors were … associated, if not identified, with Jupiter starting with Augustus," such that "an audience, which heard Paul's statements in Eph 2:2 of 'the age of this world' along with 'the ruler of the authority of the air' and was acculturated with the Greco-Roman Pantheon and the currents of Roman imperial ideology and propaganda, would naturally equate these phrases to the emperor and Jupiter-Zeus."[54] Based on these many ancient literary sources, attested also by inscriptions like the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, jewelry such as the *Gemma Augustae*, numerous imperial cult buildings and sites, and numismatic evidences, Long concludes,

> Ephesians represents Paul's "mature" political theology for the *ekklēsia* of Christ to meet the socio-political needs of believers in Asia Minor, drawing upon such ancient political conceptions as benefactions, proclamation of the gospel, peace-making, temple-building, unified head-body imagery, military triumphs with a victorious Lord, descriptions of household relationships, and military imagery of a standing army engaged in battle.[55]

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[53] Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 142. Other sources include Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, Aristophanes's *Clouds*, Euripides's *Helena*, Empedocles's *Testimonia*, Sicilian Greek Diodorus Soculus's *Bibliotheca Historia*, L. Annaeus Cornutus's *Theologiae Commpendium*, Plutarch's *Roman Questions*, Orphic Hymns, Dio Cassius's account of the final conflict of Pompey and Octavian (Augustus) at Thessaly, Lucian's *The Double Indictment* or *Trials by Jury*, and the Alexander Romance (142–47).

[54] Ibid., 115–42, 147–53, 153.

[55] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 264; Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," Logos edition, "Political Themes."

Although proposals for a political context of Ephesians have been offered before, they lack the detailed evidences that Long now provides in arguing for a Roman imperial one.[56] As shown above, Long's work reignites both the push for the presence of politics and the pursuit of "the political Paul" in Ephesians.[57] In these aspects, Wright also argues that the Roman Empire is clearly within Paul's worldview and theology as a Pharisaic Jew, and that Paul's numerous proclamations and praises of Jesus Christ in his Gospel throughout his letters, particularly in his uses of titles like "Lord," "Savior," and "Son of God," to refer to Christ confront the claims made by the Roman emperor.[58] Winter's latest work *Divine Honours for the Caesars* also fuels the interconnection between divine honors attributed to "the Caesars" and the political situation of the Roman Empire in the first-century.[59] A political critique of the Roman Empire by Paul within Ephesians is thus highly plausible. Moreover, this work finds that the critique is more plausibly an opposition instead of an accommodation of the Empire.[60] Therefore, with the

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[56] Eberhard Faust, *Pax Christi et Pax Caesaris: Religionsgeschichtliche, Traditionsgeschichtliche Und Sozialgeschichtliche Studien Zum Ephesebrief*, NOTA 24 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993); Te-Li Lau, *The Politics of Peace: Ephesians, Dio Chrysostom, and the Confucian Four Books*, NovTSup 133 (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*; Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*.

[57] Bruno Blumenfeld's "cultural milieu method" is one of two approaches Long uses for his argument (*Political Paul*, 25–34). According to Long, it "works with the assumption that Paul's cultural world overlapped with the broader culture, and so one's attempt to find possible influences between them, regardless of their directness, are merited" ("Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 269).

[58] Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire," 160–83; Wright, "Gospel and Empire," 59–79; Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1277–1319.

[59] Winter, *Divine Honours*. This research adopts Winter's uses of "the Caesars" to refer to the office of the Roman emperor. Henceforth it refers to the emperors as a collective group. In addition, while Winter's uses of the term comprise *all* the Roman emperors, here it is limited to the emperors from Augustus until and including Nero, according to the assumption that Ephesians is written in the late 50s or early 60s.

[60] Out of the twenty-one occurrences of κύριος in Ephesians, Joseph Fantin examines only εἷς κύριος in 4:5 and concludes, "a polemic may be intended and/or that the readers may have understood it; however, it is not a significant part of the intention of the passage. It is a weak implication" (*Lord of the Entire World*, 233). On the other end of the spectrum, Neil Elliott and Warren Carter both advocate an accommodationist's position towards the Roman Empire while Harry O. Maier goes to the extreme of suggesting Paul called for a "pacification of enemies"

impetus provided by these works, the thesis of this research is to argue that Ephesians' honorific discourse and explicatures honoring Jesus Christ activate *relevant* political-religious honors of the Roman emperors that implicate the subversion of the Caesars.

To support this argument, this work first demonstrates that Ephesians exhibits honorific features and participates in first-century honorific convention of honoring benefactors. In chapter two, I will briefly review proposed genres of Ephesians before examining the discourse material in comparison with common features of first-century honorific documents that Frederick W. Danker has identified.[61] Three types of honorific features are inspected and found present in Ephesians: a distinct honorific structure, numerous honorific words and content, and thematic "word-deed" patterns. Despite Long's detailed research, he has not done enough to explicate these honorific features that contribute fruitfully to argue for Ephesians as an epistolary honorific discourse. Long's direct contribution of honorific content in Ephesians is restricted to 1:3–14.[62] Even Danker, whose epigraphic study is essential for discussing the presence of honorific material in the NT, does not sufficiently support his claim "No document in the New Testament bears such close resemblance in its periodic style to the rhetoric of inscriptions associated with Asia Minor as does the Letter to the Ephesians."[63] In his seminal work, Danker mentions Ephesians only in about fifteen instances as examples of the uses of honorific language or in comparison to honorific material although the number of words and content is well beyond that

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that is astonishingly pro-Empire (Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message," 180; Elliott, "The Apostle Paul and Empire," 100; Carter, *Roman Empire and the NT*, 22; Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*, 124, 142).

[61] Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis, MO: Clayton Publishing House, 1982), 317–493.

[62] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 276–78.

[63] Danker, *Benefactor*, 451.

figure (as will be presented in ch. 2). Moreover, Danker fails to show any thematic "word-deed" pattern from Ephesians although I have found up to nine sets. Holland Lee Hendrix, who concentrates on the honorific structural form and ethos in Ephesians,[64] similarly does not discuss or identify other honorific data present in the discourse. The explicating of these honorific features thus advances the argument to view Ephesians as an honorific discourse and is this work's first original contribution to scholarship.

Second, the use of Relevance Theory in a thoroughgoing way to study the whole discourse has not been attempted before. This is the work's second major contribution. Relevance Theory (RT) is a cognitive linguistic theory that enables the inclusion of pragmatics in the interpretation of a biblical discourse and produces greater fruitfulness than Grice's code model of communication. Where the interest of this research is concerned, it provides methodical steps to guide this work's reconstruction of the discourse context and is also an effective measurement of the context's *relevance* for the discourse and the audience's satisfaction to interpret the discourse in that context. While RT would be discussed in detail in the next section, a brief description is given below to help readers understand this overview of the research.

The human mind works like a depository that is capable of storing a lot of information and organizing them into schemas that could be accessed in an instant. RT assumes that human cognition is geared to maximize *relevance* by interpreting a discourse as efficiently and efficaciously as possible: efficient in expending minimum mental energy, and efficacious in retrieving maximum cognitive gains. These dual aspects of communication are the theory's definition of *relevance*. Recipients of an ancient discourse are believed to interpret it

[64] Holland Lee Hendrix, "On the Form and Ethos of Ephesians," *USQR* 42.4 (1988): 3–15.

pragmatically, not just semantically. Ancient ideologies and their concepts, such as political ones, are communicated and widely propagated through certain words and phrases found in literary works, on inscriptions, coins, papyri, and other ancient reliefs. The uses of these same (or closely similar) words and phrases in the discourse are called *triggers* and would trigger and activate the ancient ideologies and concepts just mentioned. Multiple occurrences (at strategic places in a discourse) of an author's ostensive and explicit uses of such *triggers* would be a strong indication of his or her intention to communicate according to those ancient ideologies and concepts that these explicatures project. They would also produce implicit effects that are (and ought to be) complementary and efficacious to the theme or schema of the discourse. In this way, *relevance* is maximized as the explicatures would be efficiently processed with minimum effort and the resulting implicatures would be efficacious in producing maximum cognitive gains for the audience. One could then conclude that the *cognitive environment shared* by the author and audiences, and from which these concepts of *relevance* are derived, is the context *relevant* for the discourse.

Therefore, this work advocates that Ephesians possesses features consistent with honorific inscriptions and decrees and proposes to consider it as an epistolary honorific discourse comprising an honor/dishonor motif. The schema of this honorific discourse highlights that God and Jesus Christ are explicitly honored as the Supreme Benefactor and Great Benefactor respectively.[65] The explicatures of Jesus Christ are found to be voluminous, repetitive, dense,

[65] Danker consistently underscores with evidences from many parts of the NT that God is the "Chief Benefactor" and Jesus Christ is the "Great Benefactor" (*Benefactor*, 325, 331, 340, 350, 408). Danker says of Eph 4:32–5:1 "God is the ultimate benefactor, whose goodness and forgiveness exhibited in Christ Jesus mark him as the exemplar of arête and therefore as the prime model for imitation" (350). As such, this work adopts the same title for Christ while designating God the Father as Supreme Benefactor to acknowledge/distinguish his cosmic role. This distinction shall be explained in ch. 2.

amplified and strategically located. They are categorized into Christ's function, positions, achievements, purposes, prerogatives, and titles. Moreover, they manifest his benefactions, authority, and honorific roles and profile, proclaiming him as the Great and Ideal Benefactor to all his followers. These honors of Christ are further found to efficiently trigger political and religious concepts and honors of the Caesars because their renown was ubiquitous and they were honored as great political benefactors and received divine honors. More importantly, Christ's honors are found to parallel, indeed even challenge, the Caesars' roles, benefactions, profile, and authority. Altogether, these implicit connotations or "echoes" to the Caesars and point-counterpoint comparisons between the honorific concepts of the Caesars and of Christ produce the efficacious effect that the Caesars are subverted. The ease of recalling the Caesars and the efficacy of their subversion by Christ by means of *triggers* mean that the Caesars' political and religious honors make up the *cognitive environment* common to and *shared* by the author and the recipients, so that in such a setting the recipients would derive great satisfaction in interpreting Paul's honorific explicatures of Jesus Christ. The evidences for these claims are presented in chapters three through five. Consequently, this work demonstrates and concludes that the Greco-Roman political-religious environment that supplies these ideologies of the Caesars is the *shared cognitive environment* that is of *optimal relevance* for the explicatures of Jesus Christ in Ephesians. The *relevance* of these political-religious concepts of the Caesars to Christ's honors in Ephesians would demonstrate the *relevance* of a Greco-Roman political-religious context situated in the region of Asia Minor for the discourse to the Ephesians.

Relevance Theory

It is discussed earlier that context is the focal concern in the pragmatic examination of a text. Yet, in current biblical scholarship, attention seems to be given primarily to semantic studies, and guidelines and controls appear to be lacking to judge the relevance of a proposed context in relation to a text. As a result, situations could arise where different contexts appear equally possible for the interpretation of the same discourse. In response, Gene Green proposes the use of Relevance Theory (RT) in biblical interpretation "as a pragmatic model of communication which argues that the recovery of contextual information is essential for comprehension and that communication is largely an inferential process, not simply a matter of encoding and decoding."[66] Following Green's proposal, this research is the first of its kind in employing RT to analyze the whole Ephesians discourse in its attempt to reconstruct a context that is *relevant* for the interpretation of the epistle.

RT, as proposed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson since 1986,[67] is "a cognitive theory of human communication" that has been applied in various fields of study such as grammar, humor, media discourses, literature, politeness, and translation.[68] It is a "model for understanding how texts and contexts, authors and readers, work together in the communication of meaning."[69]

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[66] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 218.

[67] Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995); Sperber and Wilson, "Précis of Relevance: Communication and Cognition," *Behavioral & Brain Sciences* 10.4 (1987): 697–754; Sperber and Wilson, *Meaning and Relevance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber, "Relevance Theory," in *The Handbook of Pragmatics*, ed. Laurence R. Horn and Gregory L. Ward, Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics 16 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 607–32.

[68] Francisco Yus, "A Decade of Relevance Theory," *JOP* 30.3 (1998): 305–45, doi:10.1016/S0378-2166(98)00015-0; Yus, "Relevance Theory," in *Concise Encyclopedia of Pragmatics*, ed. Jacob L. Mey, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2009), 854–61.

[69] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 218.

Over the last three decades, various linguistic scholars have demonstrated RT's usefulness,[70] and its greater fruitfulness over Grice's code model of communication theory.[71] The formation and annual meetings of scholars with interest in RT at the International Meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature further signal the potential of this theory.[72] In the field of biblical studies, RT

[70] A few significant ones are: Regina Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse: A Study with Special Reference to Sissala*, Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 55 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Robyn Carston, *Thoughts and Utterances: The Pragmatics of Explicit Communication* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002); Carston, "Relevance Theory and the Sayings/Implicating Distinction," in *The Handbook of Pragmatics*, ed. Laurence R. Horn and Gregory L. Ward, Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics 16 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 633–56; Diane Blakemore, *Relevance and Linguistic Meaning: The Semantics and Pragmatics of Discourse Markers*, Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 99 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Markus Tendahl, *A Hybrid Theory of Metaphor: Relevance Theory and Cognitive Linguistics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). Francisco Yus writes extensively on RT, producing a number of introductory articles in different journals, handbook and encyclopedia (Yus, "A Decade of Relevance Theory," 305–45; Yus, "Relevance Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Keith Brown, 2nd ed. [Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2006]; Yus, "Relevance Theory," ed. Mey, 854–61)., and a detailed bibliography of RT and its application in linguistic fields (Yus, "Bibliography on Relevance Theory," https://sites.google.com/site/franciscoyus/bibliography-on-relevance).

[71] Yus describes the difference between RT and the Gricean model as follows: "Unlike the so-called **code model** of communication, according to which messages are simply coded and decoded, Sperber and Wilson favor an **inferential model** in which decoding plays a minor role compared with the inferential activity of the interpreter. Within this approach, the decoding of utterances underdetermines their interpretation and serves rather as a piece of evidence about the speaker's meaning. Verbal communication does involve the use of a code (i.e., the grammar of the language), but inference plays a major role in turning the schematic coded input into fully propositional interpretations. One of the most interesting contributions of RT is, precisely, the claim that there is a wide gap between the (coded) sentence meaning and the (inferred) speaker's meaning, which has to be filled inferentially. Comprehension starts at the context-free identification of the utterance's logical form, which is then enriched to yield explicit information (**explicatures**) and/or implication information (**implicatures**)" ("Relevance Theory," ed. Mey, 854). For detailed comparisons and contrasts between RT and Grice's code model, see Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 1–38; Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse*, 34–42; Deirdre Wilson, "Relevance and Understanding," in *Language and Understanding*, ed. Gillian Brown et al., Oxford Applied Linguistics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 37–58; Joseph D. Fantin, *The Greek Imperative Mood in the New Testament: A Cognitive and Communicative Approach*, Studies in Biblical Greek 12 (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 43–60, Appendix 1.

[72] Gene L. Green, "Relevance Theory and Theological Interpretation: Thoughts on Metarepresentation," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 4.1 (2010): 75–90.

has been employed in Bible translations,[73] studies of biblical Greek and Greek texts,[74] discourse analysis,[75] and theological and biblical interpretations of the NT.[76]

Ernst R. Wendland applies RT in his works on Ephesians, maintaining that the principalities and powers mentioned in the epistle are spiritual in nature.[77] Green's articles provide a good basis for applying RT in biblical and theological interpretation.[78] Fantin combines the use of RT with historical-critical method to argue that the use of the term κυρίος in

[73] Ernst-August Gutt, "Matthew 9:4–17 in the Light of Relevance Theory," *Notes on Translation* 113 (1986): 1–20; Gutt, *Relevance Theory: A Guide to Successful Communication in Translation* (Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics; New York: United Bible Societies, 1992); Kevin Gary Smith, "Bible Translation and Relevance Theory: The Translation of Titus" (PhD diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2000); Harriet S. Hill, *The Bible at Cultural Crossroads: From Translation to Communication* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2006); Karen H. Jobes, "Relevance Theory and the Translation of Scripture," *JETS* 50.4 (2007): 773–97; Ernst R. Wendland, *Finding and Translating the Oral-Aural Elements in Written Language: The Case of the New Testament Epistles* (Lewiston: Mellen, 2008).

[74] Margaret Gavin Sim, "A Relevance Theoretic Approach to the Particle Ἵνα in Koine Greek" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2006); Fantin, *Greek Imperative Mood*; Fredrick J. Long, *2 Corinthians: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, BHGNT (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015).

[75] Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse*; Blass, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 2000; Blass "How Much Interpretive Resemblance to the Source Text Is Possible in the Translation of Parables?," in *In the Mind and Across Minds: A Relevance-Theoretic Perspective on Communication and Translation*, ed. Ewa Wałaszewska, Marta Kisielewska-Krysiuk, and Agnieszka Piskorska (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), 311–26; Robert A. Dooley, "Relevance Theory and Discourse Analysis: Complementary Approaches for Translator Training" (paper presented at the BT2007, Dallas, TX, 15 October 2007), 1–11.

[76] Ernst R. Wendland, "A Tale of Two Debtors: On the Interaction of Text, Cotext, and Context in a New Testament Dramatic Narrative (Luke 7:36–50)," in *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis*, ed. David Alan Black, Katherine Barnwell, and Stephen Levinsohn (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 101–43; Wendland, "Contextualizing the Potentates, Principalities and Powers in the Epistle to the Ephesians," *Neot* 33.1 (1999): 199–223. Tim Meadowcroft, "Relevance as a Mediating Category in the Reading of Biblical Texts: Venturing Beyond the Hermeneutical Circle," *JETS* 45.4 (2002): 611–27. Stephen W. Pattemore, *Souls Under the Altar: Relevance Theory and the Discourse Structure of Revelation*, UBS Monograph Series 9 (New York: United Bible Societies, 2003); Pattemore, *The People of God in the Apocalypse: Discourse, Structure, and Exegesis*, ed. Richard Bauckham, SNTSMS 128 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 799–812; Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 217–40; Green, "Relevance Theory and Theological Interpretation," 75–90. Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*.

[77] Wendland, "Contextualizing the Potentates," 137–43. The difference between his work and mine shall be commented in ch. 5.

[78] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 217–40; Green, "Relevance Theory and Theological Interpretation," 75–90.

the Pauline letters "involves a polemic against the living Roman emperor and … his (and the Roman state's) claim of sovereignty over every aspect of the lives of those under his authority."[79] Long couples his extensive work on emphasis and prominence with RT in expounding the Greek text of Second Corinthians.[80] Below is a brief explanation of RT's concepts and principles.[81]

RT stems from the assumption that "human beings are endowed with a biologically rooted ability to maximize the relevance of incoming stimuli (including linguistic utterances and other communicative behavior)," and this "pursuit of relevance" is "always geared to obtaining the highest reward from the stimuli" being processed.[82] In the words of Sperber and Wilson:

> Human cognition … is aimed at improving the quantity, quality, and organization of the individual's knowledge. To achieve this goal as efficiently as possible, the individual must at each moment try to allocate his processing resources to the most *relevant* information … information likely to bring about the greatest improvement of knowledge at the smallest processing cost.[83]

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[79] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 6. This is useful for my section on the use of κυρίος in Ephesians.

[80] Long, *2 Corinthians*, xxiv–vi, xxxviii–ix. He writes, "I use the notion of emphasis to refer to marked morphosyntactic and structural features of the text that are reflective of the ostensive explicatures of the author(s) to communicate purposefully" (xxvi). It is through Long's classes that I learned about emphasis theories and RT and how they contribute enormously to this thesis.

[81] Other descriptions of RT concepts and principles can be found in Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse*, 44–64; Meadowcroft, "Relevance as a Mediating Category," 622–25; Pattemore, *Souls under the Altar*, 16–24; Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 222–34; Green, "Relevance Theory and Theological Interpretation," 75–82; Fantin, *Greek Imperative Mood*, 335–39; Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 23–36.

[82] Deirdre Wilson states four basic assumptions ("Relevance and Understanding," 44). Francisco Yus summarizes them as such: "(a) the decoded meaning of the sentence is compatible with a number of different interpretations in the same context; (b) these interpretations are graded in terms of accessibility; (c) hearers rely on a powerful criterion when selecting the most appropriate interpretation; and (d) this criterion makes it possible to select one interpretation among the range of possible interpretations, to the extent that when a first interpretation is considered a candidate matching the intended interpretation, the hearer will stop at this point" ("Relevance Theory," ed. Mey, 854).

[83] Sperber and Wilson, "Précis of Relevance," 700. Wilson and Sperber also explain it as such: "As a result of constant selection pressure towards increasing efficiency, the human cognitive system has developed in such a way that our perceptual mechanisms tend automatically to pick up potentially relevant stimuli, our memory retrieval mechanisms tend automatically to activate potentially relevant assumptions, and our inferential mechanisms tend

This is summed up in the *cognitive principle of relevance*: "Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance."[84] In RT, *relevance* is "an important psychological property … involved in mental processes"[85] and is defined as the degree of relatedness between new and old information, and which gives rise to the derivation of newer information through an inference process.[86] The greater is the degree of relatedness, the greater is the relevance. Furthermore, relevance is determined by two important factors, the cognitive effects to be gained and the processing efforts to be expensed, such that the greater the positive cognitive effects on the one hand and the lesser the processing efforts on the other, the greater is the relevance.

Thus in a communication event, a communicator or writer with an *informative intention*– "the intention to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a certain set of assumptions"– makes manifest this intention by producing or expressing an utterance to an audience.[87] This is the writer's *communicative intention*, defined as "the intention to make mutually manifest to audience and communicator the communicator's informative intention."[88] As a result, a set of

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spontaneously to process them in the most productive way" ("Relevance Theory," in *UCL Working Paper in Linguistics 14*, 2002, 254).

[84] Wilson and Sperber, "Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 610.

[85] Sperber and Wilson, "Précis of Relevance," 702.

[86] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 48. Only information that aids in performing a cognitive task is worth processing and such is "easier to access from the environment than memory." Some information is new but has little or no relation to the situation and produces little value despite high processing cost. Information that is *relevant* is that which is "connected with old information" and "used together as premises in an inference process" to give rise to newer information.

Tim Meadowcroft explains inference as "the term that describes what happens when a hearer takes account of her own context, understands the speaker's context, assumes that the speaker is taking account of the hearer's context, and in the light of all that is aware what a speaker means by a particular statement made in a particular setting" ("Relevance as a Mediating Category," 622).

[87] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 58; Sperber and Wilson, "Précis of Relevance," 700.

[88] Sperber and Wilson, "Précis of Relevance," 700; Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 61.

ostensive stimuli is being presented that forms his/her *ostensive communication*. Such stimuli are ostensive because they are intentionally made manifest by the author to achieve certain desired purposes, and could be in the forms of gestures, actions, sounds, words, sentences, discourses etc. There could be any number of stimuli that comprise a communicator's ostensive communication. In the case of this research, the only stimuli we are concerned with are the written discourse to the Ephesians and the explicit contents in it.

By the fact that the author has communicated ostensibly encourages his audience that his discourse is "relevant enough to be worth processing."[89] This leads us to the *communicative principle of relevance*: "Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance."[90] This presumption of optimal relevance is further explained in two parts: (1) "The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough to be worth the addressees' processing effort," and (2) "It is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences."[91] With both cognitive and communicative principles of relevance in force, a stimulus is said to be of *optimal relevance* to an audience when it requires the least processing efforts and produces the greatest positive cognitive effects.[92]

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[89] Wilson and Sperber, "Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 611.

[90] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 158; Wilson and Sperber, "Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 612.

[91] Wilson and Sperber, "Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 612.

[92] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 156–57. Meadowcroft explains "With respect to intention, according to relevance theory, one of the pre-conditions of relevance is that the speaker expects that his or her utterance is relevant, that there is sufficiently in common with the hearers of the utterance that they will discern it to be something worth making the effort to listen to. With respect to contextual effect, …the more the hearer can discern that the utterance has something to do with her own context, the more likely is communication to be successful. At the same time, …the easier it is for a hearer to see where a speaker's utterance impacts on the hearer's own context, the more likely is communication to be successful" ("Relevance as a Mediating Category," 622).

The audience's attention is drawn to the ostensive stimuli and their processing. Stimuli that are explicitly expressed are called *explicatures*; others are "implicitly conveyed, or implicated," and are called *implicatures*.[93] While explicatures are the actual words used and are obvious to the audience, implicatures are to be inferred. Since a number of different implicated premises (each of varying relevance) could be inferred from an explicature, the presumption of optimal relevance constrains the interpretive process such that when an audience infers *the* implicature intended by the writer, the process stops. The first implicated premise that satisfies the principles of relevance is concluded to be the implicature.[94]

For an audience to infer a writer's intended implicature successfully, they ought to be able to interpret the stimuli in the context in which the author composed and expressed the discourse. RT as a cognitive theory defines context as *cognitive environment*. Although some scholars use "context" and "cognitive environment" interchangeably,[95] this work prefers to use the latter because, firstly, the meaning of "context" is at times too broad and vague without consideration of how a discourse and its stimuli would be processed cognitively;[96] secondly, discourse comprehension and interpretation is essentially a cognitive process constrained by the

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[93] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 61.

[94] Wilson, "Relevance and Understanding," 49–52. Wilson states "if an utterance has a highly salient (i.e. immediately accessible) interpretation which the speaker *could* have intended, then, by…the definition of optimal relevance, this is the one she *should* have intended: she cannot rationally have intended to communicate anything else" (49–50) and also that "The first interpretation tested and found consistent with the principle of relevance is the only interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance: all other interpretations are disallowed" (52).

[95] Ibid., 41; Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 808; Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 235.

[96] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 226; Pattemore, *Souls under the Altar*, 53. Pattemore says "Context is neither simply the 'context of situation' (a vague and ill-defined notion) nor simply the co-text, but the sets of mental representations (including mental representations of situation and co-text) that form the cognitive environment within which a text is processed."

principles of relevance such that only that part of one's environment that would satisfy the presumption of optimal relevance is activated.[97] The nature of cognitive environment is that it is "information which is relevant for the interpretation of an utterance—not all the information 'out there;'"[98] it is "not a monolithic entity 'out there' and preestablished."[99] Furthermore, it is "built in discourse" and "may be constructed from the discourse itself and the encyclopedic memory."[100] Finally, RT postulates that the cognitive environment is information *shared* by the writer and the audience, i.e. it must be accessible to both writer and audience. Otherwise, miscommunication and misinterpretation are bound to happen.

As such, the term "cognitive environment" would be used to refer to the historical-ideological background that this research is attempting to situate using RT while the term "context" would be used for more localized setting such as the literary honorific context. Thus, based on these RT concepts and principles, one would be able to reconstruct the cognitive environment of a discourse like Ephesians from the explicatures and implicatures found in it.

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[97] Green advocates we "must also ask which aspects of their cognitive environment (drawn from discourse and memory) would allow for a particular utterance to achieve relevance" ("Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 236).

[98] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 808. See also Wilson, "Relevance and Understanding," 41; Pattemore, *Souls under the Altar*, 54. Pattemore says, "This cognitive environment is not preselected or given, but is constructed in the course of the hermeneutic process in order to maximize relevance." Regina Blass argues, "Contexts are … not determined by particular text structures, they have to be *chosen*" (*Relevance Relations in Discourse*, 27–28). She further argues against the notion that "context is something given in advance, automatically determined by co-text or physical environment" (41).

[99] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 235. Also Pattemore, *Souls under the Altar*, 54.

[100] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 235. Green further explains, "In utterance interpretation, context construction depends upon the communicative principle of relevance. Relevance to an individual is understood as that which yields adequate cognitive effects for the least processing effort. Within this framework, therefore, priority would not be given automatically to any one particular aspect of the cognitive environment over another since what is important is whether or not some assumption is salient or manifest. If an assumption is remote or inaccessible, we must ask the question whether a reader would be capable of representing it given the constraints of relevance."

The recovery of the ostensive stimuli would be the groundwork on which the reconstruction of the shared cognitive environment of the author and addressees is performed.

Reconstruction of the Shared Cognitive Environment of a Biblical Discourse

Although RT is often explained using short conversational utterances, it is also applicable for texts. Regina Blass, in employing RT in discourse analysis, distinguishes discourse as "all acts of verbal communication" and text as the "'explicit', or 'recorded part' of discourse."[101] In this way, text, just as verbal conversation, is also a subset of discourse. The same principles of relevance should thus also apply to a text comprising many sentences put together cohesively and coherently to express a certain idea or topic. Furthermore, while cohesion and coherence help make a text understandable, context, Blass claims, "plays a crucial role in the interpretation of a discourse, and … a text may be interpreted quite differently in different contexts. Contexts are … not determined by particular text structures, they have to be *chosen*."[102] In the words of Stephen Pattemore, "[Blass] argues that discourse meaning and discourse structure are not inherent in the text, thought of as a set of linguistic signs (words spoken or marks on paper), but in the interaction between the text and the context."[103] The critical issue of context construction for optimal relevance in interpretation is brought to the fore. In response to the situation that "no theory so far has succeeded in making adequate proposals as to how the right context is chosen

[101] Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse*, 10.

[102] Ibid., 27–28. She further argues against the notion that "context is something given in advance, automatically determined by co-text or physical environment" (41).

[103] Pattemore, *Souls under the Altar*, 52.

in any given situation,"[104] Blass advocates RT as the solution. Based on Blass' research, Pattemore is certain that RT is able to refine and improve the work of discourse and text analyses, by examining individual text units and a whole discourse for relevance:

> the whole effort of biblical exegesis and hermeneutics could be described as discourse analysis–an attempt to follow the cognitive processes of the earliest readers…. Using the insights of RT, it is now clear that the structural units which contribute to meaning at every level, from the smallest to the whole text, can be defined as sections of text over which there is an optimization of relevance. Hierarchical and coordinate relationships between structural units will also be such as to optimize relevance for the complex of such units being considered.[105]

1. Recognizing Triggers from the Explicatures

In RT, the reconstruction of the *shared cognitive environment* (SCE) begins with recognizing "triggers" from the explicatures.[106] Triggers are like light bulbs signaling readers that *ad-hoc concepts* need to be formed within and beyond the lexical range of the explicit words used. A discourse thus comprises many triggers, and thereby ad-hoc concepts. If triggers light up the contours of the subjects or topics they modify in the text, then ad-hoc concepts add colors to

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[104] Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse*, 41. Pattemore too claims: "it is undeniable that all discourse analysts emphasize the importance of context…. What they appear to lack is an adequate definition of context and an adequate model to describe and predict the choice and limitation of context, which clearly takes place in any communication" (*Souls under the Altar*, 53).

[105] Pattemore, *Souls under the Altar*, 56. Pattemore concludes, "Discourse analysis, then, is inherently pragmatic and it is this drive to understand texts within the pragmatics of real communication which leads us to the principle of relevance as the primary criterion for discourse structure. In searching for optimal relevance over the various levels of discourse structure of a biblical text, it needs to be clearly understood that we are primarily seeking to uncover the relevance to the original readers…. Fundamentally we assumed that human thought processes, in particular logical and inferential processes, are to some degree universal and unbounded by local and temporal conditioning. … Second, we assume that we can reconstruct a sufficient amount of the cognitive environment of the first readers/hearers to make meaningful statements about their probable perceptions of relevance. But Blass has argued correctly that in the absence of contextual information it is valid to construct a hypothetical context if we can show that this leads to optimal relevance for the text" (57).

[106] Green proposes "We must pay closest attention to the 'triggers' within the discourse which activate certain concepts" ("Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 236).

them in order to produce a complete and well-defined picture of the author's intended message regarding these subjects/topics.

Triggers alert readers to access information in their minds that is "stored in three different types of entry: *logical*, *encyclopedic* and *lexical*."[107] *Logical* entry consists of information that is "consistent across time and culture and between speakers and hearers," and "only points to the irreducible properties of the concept."[108] *Encyclopedic* entry "contains all sorts of information that is incidental to the concept"[109] and "about its extension and/or denotation: the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it," "vary across speakers and times,"[110] and is "open-ended, allowing for the constant addition of new information."[111] *Lexical* entry is "information about the natural-language counterpart of the concept: the word or phrase of natural language which expresses it."[112]

Green asserts that "words are only a piece of evidence pointing to what a speaker or writer intends to communicate."[113] While dictionaries and lexicons provide us with a logical set and useful variety of word meanings, they are incapable of representing every possible nuance

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[107] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 86–90; Blass, *Relevance Relations in Discourse*, 54; Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 801–4.

[108] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 801.

[109] Ernst-August Gutt, *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context*, 2nd ed. (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2000), 141.

[110] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 87, 88.

[111] Gutt, *Translation and Relevance*, 141. Sperber and Wilson describe the difference between the logical and encyclopedic entries as follows: "The information in encyclopedic entries is representational: it consists of a set of assumptions which may undergo deductive rules. The information in logical entries, by contrast, is computational: it consists of a set of deductive rules which apply to assumptions in which the associated concept appears" (*Relevance*, 89).

[112] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 86.

[113] Gene L. Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and the Lexicon," *BBR* 22.3 (2012): 315–33.

and sense of a word used in different contexts. As such, for biblical discourses, though one might indeed consult them to begin interpretation, we cannot solely depend on the lexical entry.[114] As a result, we must move beyond a dated and purely code-based theory of communication[115] to access what I call the "world of the audience" contained within the encyclopedic entries so as to achieve a "more context-oriented and dynamic approach to understanding the relationship between lexemes and concepts, and the nature of concepts, in the communication of meaning."[116] This is where the available information of that world is accessed: evidences including but not limited to literary sources, and archaeological discoveries like decrees and inscriptions,[117]

[114] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 809.

[115] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and the Lexicon," 317.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Danker, *Benefactor*; Robert K. Sherk, ed., *The Roman Empire: Augustus to Hadrian*, trans. Robert K. Sherk, vol. 6, Translated Documents of Greece and Rome (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); S. R. Llewelyn, ed., *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity. Vol. 9: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published 1986–87* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Alison E. Cooley, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); S. R. Llewelyn, James R. Harrison, and E. J. Bridge, eds., *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity. Vol. 10: A Review of the Greek and Other Inscriptions and Papyri Published Between 1988 and 1992* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).

structures and monuments such as the *Ara Pacis Augustae*,[118] imperial statues, temples and shrines,[119] coins,[120] and others.[121]

2. Forming Ad-hoc Concepts of the Triggers

The second step of context reconstruction is the vital cognitive activity of *ad-hoc concept formation*, "a characteristic of all communication."[122] Green warrants the use of ad-hoc concept formation for biblical literature, which is "true human-to-human, as well as divine-to-human,

[118] Erika Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Greenwich, CN: New York Graphic Society, 1968); Mario Torelli, *Typology & Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs*, Jerome Lectures 14 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982), 27–61; Barbara A. Kellum, "What We See and What We Don't See. Narrative Structure and the Ara Pacis Augustae," *Art History* 17.1 (1994): 26–45; David Castriota, *The Ara Pacis Augustae and the Imagery of Abundance in Later Greek and Early Roman Imperial Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Kathleen Lamp, "The Ara Pacis Augustae: Visual Rhetoric in Augustus' Principate," *RSQ* 39.1 (2009): 1–24; Kathleen S. Lamp, "The Augustan Political Myth," in *A City of Marble: The Rhetoric of Augustus and the People in the Roman Principate*, Studies in Rhetoric/Communication (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2013), 38–57; Mary Elizabeth Podles, "Ara Pacis Augustae," *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 29.2 (2016): 62–63.

[119] Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan (1927; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 252–392, 413–67; S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990).

[120] David Van Meter, *The Handbook of Roman Imperial Coins: A Complete Guide to the History, Types and Values of Roman Imperial Coins* (Utica, NY: Laurion Press, 1991); L. Joseph Kreitzer, *Striking New Images: Roman Imperial Coinage and the New Testament World*, JSNTSup 134 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); M. Horster, "Coinage and Images of the Imperial Family: Local Identity and Roman Rule," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 26 (2013): 243–61.

[121] Lily Ross Taylor, *Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, ed. Joseph William Hewitt (Middletown, CT: American Philological Association, 1931; repr., Atlanta: Scholars, 1981); Ronald Mellor, *ΘΕΑ ΡΩΜΗ: The Worship of the Goddess Roma in the Greek World*, Untersuchungen zur Antike und zu ihrer Nachleben 42 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975); Ramsay MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); Daniel N. Schowalter, *The Emperor and the Gods: Images from the Time of Trajan*, ed. Margaret R. Miles and Bernadette J. Brooten, Harvard Dissertations in Religion 28 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); Mark Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013); Michael Koortbojian, *The Divinization of Caesar and Augustus: Precedents, Consequences, Implications* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[122] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and the Lexicon," 323. Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 806.

communication" just as for contemporary communication, on the basis that since "sentences encode thought/proposition templates, words encode concept templates."[123] The dynamics of logical, encyclopedic, and lexical entries aforementioned and the ability of the human cognition to harness them enable the pragmatic interpretation of a discourse.[124] Concepts initially activated by the triggers go through modifications by way of "narrowing," "broadening," "category extension," "reference assignment," "disambiguation" and "enrichment."[125]

Narrowing of concepts happens when the lexicalize meaning of a word is particularized and *broadening* happens when it is generalized.[126] For example, κτίζω in Eph 2:15 is very likely narrowed from its various lexical options, including the commonly used nuance of "to create," to the concept of "founding," due also to the enriching effect of its object "a new humanity." The concepts of δωρεά and *δόματα* in 4:7–8 are narrowed from the broad references to gifts and bounty to that of persons enabled and entrusted in apologetics, prophecy, evangelism, pastoring and teaching for the equipping of the saints (4:11–12). On the other hand, the use of πᾶς broadens the scope of the power concept in 1:21 –23 such that Christ's position of authority is emphasized over all forms of powers and leaves nothing excluded. *Category extension* makes use of the properties of a word together with the contextual information of the discourse to

[123] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and the Lexicon," 323; Carston, *Thoughts and Utterances*, 360.

[124] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and the Lexicon," 323.

[125] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 805–8.

[126] The close resemblances between *narrowing* and *broadening* to *particularization* and *generalization* respectively (two common semantic structural relationships in the Inductive Bible Study approach) attest to the overlap between cognitive linguistics and biblical hermeneutics, and the reliability of employing the cognitive theory in biblical discourse analysis For explanations of *particularization* and *generalization*, see David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 100–105.

describe a subject. It applies for metaphor interpretation. The knowledge that κεφαλή logically refers to the directing and controlling center of a person without which the body is dead or unable to function is "extended" to become a metaphorical category to describe Christ's relationship with the church (1:22b; 4:13b; 5:23b).

In *reference assignment*, the referents of certain words, like third person pronouns and indefinite pronouns, are specified or clarified. A good example is the contextual use of αὐτῷ and ᾧ in 1:3–14 to refer to Christ. *Disambiguation* is the removal of other possible notions or meanings of a concept such that its conceptual meaning or reference in the phrase or unit is clarified. In the phrase "He is our peace" in 2:14a, the concept of "peace" is likely disambiguated (and also narrowed) from being a state of stability and tranquility to the person of Jesus Christ who embodies it by his self-sacrifice on the cross to destroy the enmity. This is similar to the disambiguation and narrowing of the "peace of Caesar" concept brought about by a cessation of civil wars in the Roman republic through Augustus' war efforts. *Enrichment* is "the incorporation of conceptual material that is wholly pragmatically inferred, on the basis of considerations of rational communicative behavior, as these are conceived of on the relevance-theoretic account of human cognitive functioning."[127] Thus, the purpose clauses in 2:15–16 enrich the concept "peace as Christ" by specifying its purposes.

3. Constructing the Optimally Relevant Implicature

Third, the ad-hoc concept formation process initiates the construction of possible implicated premises and conclusions. Based on the *relevance-theoretic comprehension*

[127] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 233.

procedure (RTCP),[128] readers on a constant search for optimal relevance would continuously draw upon relevant information in: (a) the formation of ad-hoc concepts (as initially triggered concepts undergo modifications that could strengthen, modify or contradict existing assumptions to form more relevant concepts in order to generate beneficial contextual effects[129]); and (b) the computation and construction of implicated premises and conclusions (based on ongoing concepts formed and increasing contextual information accessed informing and affecting each other to and fro). Accessing and processing of all information, whether logical, encyclopedic or lexical, happens in an almost simultaneous fashion rather than a strict sequential ordering of steps because RTCP as an activity of our cognition is capable of managing all informational input and output concurrently.[130]

According to RT's principles of relevance, the information that enables the processing of triggers by activating ad-hoc concepts with the least effort to produce maximum cognitive effects from the implicatures is the one optimally relevant for the pragmatic interpretation of the explicatures. Deductively, the cognitive environment that provides the optimally relevant

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[128] According to Wilson and Sperber, the RTCP states that interpreters of a discourse would ("Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 613–15):

a. Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses (disambiguations, reference resolutions, implicatures, etc.) in order of accessibility.
b. Stop when [their] expectations of relevance are satisfied (or abandoned).

Described in methodological terms, the RTCP involves the following subtasks:

a. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about explicit content (EXPLICATURES) via decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution, and other pragmatic enrichment processes.
b. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual assumptions (IMPLICATED PREMISES).
c. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual implications (IMPLICATED CONCLUSIONS).

These subtasks "are developed in parallel against a background of expectations which may be revised or elaborated as the utterance unfolds" (615).

[129] Green, "Lexical Pragmatics and Biblical Interpretation," 807. Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 235.

[130] Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 235.

information would also be optimally relevant for those explicatures. In this way, the reconstruction of the shared cognitive environment of the explicatures and thus of the discourse would be achieved.

The Limitations of Relevance Theory

Despite RT's effectiveness for this research and in assessing discourse interpretation and context, it has limitations and unresolvable features.[131] First, it may not account for the complexity of interaction between the author and the letter-sender's reading/explanation performance of the letter. Paul's letters were carried by his trusted associates who were also entrusted with the responsibility to read and explain the contents to the various recipient groups and churches. Although we are fairly confident of the final form of these letters, we cannot be fully certain how the letter-readers would have performed them, i.e. what words or pericopies of the texts could he/she have emphasized or how he/she could have interpreted the letter that could be unique to the situations of the recipients. RT does not speak to that complex scenario. Second, RT may not be able to address all the relevant cognitive environment(s). As shall be demonstrated in ch. 5, RT is useful to identify the optimally relevant shared cognitive environment of the discourse and compare the degree of efficiency and efficacy of other existing proposed contexts. However, it may not be able to exhaustively elucidate all other possible relevant cognitive environments. Although RT, like any other methodologies or criticisms, is not an omni-competent tool, it has enabled this researcher to reconstruct the context of the letter.

[131] István Kecskés points out that RT lacks attending to the social aspect of language since there is no room for "divergence of assumptions according to class, gender, or ethnicity" ("Communicative Principle and Communication," in *Concise Encyclopedia of Pragmatics*, ed. Jacob L. Mey, 2nd ed. [Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2009], 106–9).

Testing Criteria for Triggers and Ad-Hoc Concepts

The late I. Howard Marshall commented, "Exegesis seeks for an interpretation of a passage which will account satisfactorily for all the features of that passage, both on its own and in its context."[132] Gordon Fee defines it more specifically as "the historical investigation into the meaning of the biblical text."[133] To accomplish this task well, D.A. Carson and recently David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina caution scholars of the potential exegetical and interpretive fallacies often made by new and seasoned interpreters alike.[134] One such fallacy that this research is careful to avoid is what Samuel Sandmel refers to as "parallelomania."[135] This is "the uncritical citation and imposition of historical parallels,"[136] whether verbal or conceptual.[137] In view of the earlier-mentioned context reconstruction process in which each *trigger* activates its own *ad-hoc concept* often by using similar or identical wordings, testing criteria are thus important to ensure that these parallel words or concepts between the *triggers* and *ad-hoc concepts* are neither simply coincidental nor "bare phenomena."[138] Instead, they are pertinent to demonstrate the plausibility that (1) Paul had these ad-hoc concepts in mind; (2) they could be easily activated by the recipients and not some "heuristic fiction" or imagination of a modern scholar; and (3) they

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[132] I. Howard Marshall, ed., *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 15.

[133] Gordon D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 1.

[134] D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996); Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 249–69, "Interpretive Fallacies."

[135] Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81.1 (1962): 1–13.

[136] Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 258.

[137] Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 43–44, 135–36.

[138] Ibid., 43.

could "conform to the hermeneutical conventions of a particular community of readers,"[139] i.e. the community of early believers in Asia Minor in the first-century.

Richard B. Hays, in observing similar features of intertextuality in rabbinic midrash and Paul's letters, highlights seven criteria for testing intertextual echoes of Scripture in the letters of Paul.[140] Wright commends these as criteria that "we could profitably apply to 'echoes of Caesar' alongside 'echoes of scripture.'"[141] Long also uses Hays' criteria[142] and in addition considers a number of other factors in his latest work *In Step with God's Word*, a culmination of his exegesis class materials that include "'best practices' of biblical interpretation," to examine "the possible presence of a network of related ideas and/or the extent of any conventional schema."[143] In this research, I have assimilated both Hays' and Long's criteria into the list below to examine the *triggers*, i.e. Christ's explicit honors in Ephesians, and their *ad-hoc concepts*, i.e. the political-

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[139] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 26–27.

[140] Ibid., 10–21, 29–32. Hays' list includes: "availability," "volume," "recurrence," "thematic coherence," "historical plausibility," "history of interpretation," and "satisfaction." These criteria are adopted by G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 33.

[141] Wright, "Gospel and Empire," 61. Note Christoph Heilig's recent work that evaluates Hays' criteria and attempts to measure the "background plausibility and explanatory potential" of supposed echoes as an alternative method (*Hidden Criticism? The Methodology and Plausibility of the Search for a Counter-Imperial Subtext in Paul*, WUNT 2/392 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015], 40–46).

[142] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 269.

[143] Fredrick J. Long, *In Step with God's Word: Interpreting the New Testament with God's People*, GHTS 1 (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2017), "Chapter 5: Lexical Research," 211. Long considers these factors:

a. the repetition of related concepts that may reflect or generate a recognizable schema;
b. the relative density of related concepts within a delimited discourse space;
c. the strategic and progressive use of related concepts in important discourse locations;
d. the amplification of related concepts by marked and emphatic constructions;
e. the situational relevance of the related concepts within the shared cognitive environment; and
f. the satisfying insight gained with respect to these related concepts in terms of communicative efficiency and maximal impact on the audience(s).

religious honors of the Caesars. Since triggers and ad-hoc concepts are like two sides of the same coin, the same set of criteria would apply for both.

1. *Volume and repetition*. The quantity of occurrence of a word or concept in a discourse. Such repetitions and recurrences signify an author's preference and intention to use a certain word or concept.
2. *Density*. The repetitive occurrences of a word or concept within a delimited range, like a pericope. Apart from *volume and repetition*, density indicates the word or concept is highly significant in that pericope.
3. *Amplification*. The use of marked or emphatic constructions to amplify or make prominent a word or concept. Long's development of emphasis and prominence in the NT introduces thirteen different types of emphases useful for this criterion.[144]
4. *Strategic location*. The location or place in the discourse where a word or concept occurs such that it significantly emphasizes a theme or topic.
5. *Historical availability*. The historical plausibility that a concept or an echo is available to the author such that he could use it and to the audience such that they could understand it.
6. *Relevance and satisfaction*. According to RT, the *efficiency* of a word or concept to be recalled (minimum processing effort) and its *efficacy* in meaning effect (maximum impact/cognitive gains) are the measures of *relevance*. Likewise, *satisfaction* is maximized when minimum effort is used in processing (*efficiency*) while maximum cognitive benefit is gained (*efficacy*). In this way, *relevance* and *satisfaction* are essentially the same thing. Hays

[144] Fredrick J. Long, "Emphasis and Prominence Markers in Greek–A Proposal and Case Study within 2 Corinthians," 2012, 5; Long, *2 Corinthians*, xxxi. For Long's terminology and approach to emphasis and prominence, see Ibid., xxvi–xxx, xxxi–xxxviii.

acknowledges that his "satisfaction" criterion is "difficult to articulate precisely without falling into the affective fallacy, but it is finally the most important test."[145] Long rightly identifies "communicative efficiency" and "maximal impact" as the factors contributing to "satisfying insight."[146] Thus, RT, while being a viable method to reconstruct the context of the discourse, also serves as a concrete guide and tool to measure Hays' "satisfaction" criterion.

7. *Historical plausibility*. The historical potentiality that Paul could have intended the alleged efficacious meaning effect and that his audience could have understood it.
8. *Shared Cognitive Environment*. The historical and/or cognitive setting which maximizes the *relevance* of a word or concept and which both the author and audience share.

The list above is arranged according to their order of assessment in this research. The criteria *volume and repetition*, *strategic location*, and *relevance and satisfaction* are combinations of a number of similar criterions between Hays' and Long's lists. Firstly, two of Hays' criteria, "thematic coherence" and "history of interpretation," are excluded. Long has already demonstrated very succinctly the coherence of the political-religious theme through the whole Ephesians discourse in his work and need not be replicated here.[147] Secondly, while earlier scholars' interpretations could help to fuel a new work, Hays also argues the probability that "Christian tradition has distorted Paul's voice or missed its undertones."[148] This authenticates

[145] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 31.

[146] Long, *In Step with God's Word*, "Chapter 5: Lexical Research," 211.

[147] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 254–309.

[148] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 31.

Green's observation mentioned at the start of this introduction.[149] However, Hays is also optimistic that a "historically sensitive exegesis can recover echoes previously dampened or drowned out."[150] Thus, this current work can be described as a "recovery of the context," in the words of John Hollander,

> The reader of texts, in order to overhear echoes, must have some kind of access to an earlier voice, and to its cave of resonant signification, analogous to that of the author of the later text. When such access is lost in a community of reading, what may have been an allusion may fade in prominence; and yet a scholarly recovery of the context would restore the allusion, by revealing intent as well as by showing means.[151]

On the whole, this work's key contributions are 1) in explicating the honorific features of Ephesians not observed/identified by previous scholars but that supports the proposal to read it as an epistolary honorific discourse, and 2) in employing RT as a method to analyze the whole of the Ephesians discourse and to reconstruct its shared cognitive environment (i.e. "context") and as an example of incorporating pragmatics in the examination and interpretation of Scripture. Regarding the research question, it would finally maintain that a Greco-Roman political-religious environment is a *relevant* context of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

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[149] Green has commented "Current trends in biblical interpretation point to the context of a book's reception history or the theological context in which we read Scripture" ("Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," 226–27).

[150] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 31.

[151] John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 65–66.

CHAPTER 2. THE HONORIFIC DISCOURSE OF EPHESIANS

This chapter provides a brief overview of proposed genres of Ephesians followed by the proposal that it be considered an epistolary honorific discourse. Whether in structural form, words and content, or thematic "word-deed" patterns, Ephesians possesses features consistent with honorific documents and conventions in the first-century. God and Jesus Christ are its major benefactors and honorands. The portrayal of Paul is like a mediator-herald pointing to the trustworthy deeds of Christ. Jewish and Gentile Christians are the primary beneficiaries and called to respond honorably by living worthy lives through their speech and behavior in light of the benefactions they received. A motif of honor and dishonor runs through the discourse producing an honorific schema in which God and Jesus Christ are praised and honored as the Supreme Benefactor and Great Benefactor respectively. Conversely, all other rule is correspondingly dishonored. All types and forms of human and spiritual rulers and authorities are shamed. These include those that promote alternative worship of humans and pagan deities, instigate political and religious segregations between people and between humankind and God, and deceive the followers and the church of Christ to participate in immoral and impure deeds.

Review of Proposals for Ephesians' Genre

Thematic studies of Ephesians abound and certain verses of the discourse have enjoyed great attention.[1] W. Hall Harris proposes that "the Moses-tradition appearing in the (later) rabbinic interpretations of Psalm 68 … lie behind the use of that psalm in Eph 4:8."[2] Tet-Lim Yee considers "Ephesians' 'context' in broad categories of Jewish thought and praxis."[3] Timothy G. Gombis suggests reading Ephesians as "a drama, portraying the victory of God in Christ over the dark powers that rule this present evil age."[4] Richard M. Cozart traces the presence of an "Isaianic New Exodus" triumphalism motif through the discourse.[5] Eberhard Faust offers an imperial critique.[6] Te-Li Lau reads it as a "politico-religious letter on peace."[7] Still other scholars have initiated new trails of interpretations.[8] This wide range of research can be quite insightful

[1] For example, William Harry Rader produces a history of interpretation specifically on Eph 2:11–22 only in *The Church and Racial Hostility: A History of Interpretation of Ephesians 2:11–22*, BGBE 20 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1978).

[2] Harris, *Descent of Christ*, xv.

[3] Tet-Lim N. Yee, *Jews, Gentiles, and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul's Jewish Identity and Ephesians*, ed. Richard Bauckham, SNTSMS 130 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 31.

[4] Gombis, *The Drama of Ephesians*, 16, 19.

[5] Cozart, *This Present Triumph*, 4–21, 264. Thielman's caution is important here: "Tracing the origins of the text that Paul cites in 4:8 is fraught with such uncertainty that definitive pronouncements for or against certain theories are probably ill-advised" ("Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 823).

[6] Faust, *Pax Christi et Pax Caesaris*, 280–314.

[7] Lau, *Politics of Peace*, 12, 15.

[8] Daniel K. Darko, *No Longer Living as the Gentiles: Differentiation and Shared Ethical Values in Ephesians 4.17–6.9*, LNTS 375 (London: T&T Clark, 2008); Larry J. Kreitzer, *Hierapolis in the Heavens: Studies in the Letter to the Ephesians*, LNTS 368 (New York: T&T Clark, 2008); Shkul, *Reading Ephesians*; M. Jeff Brannon, *The Heavenlies in Ephesians: A Lexical, Exegetical, and Conceptual Analysis*, LNTS 447 (London: T&T Clark, 2011).

and informative. However, it could also have stemmed from the indeterminate situation regarding Ephesians' genre that afforded scholars the space for such explorations.[9]

The genre of a discourse plays a critical role in its interpretation. A number of proposals have been made for the genre of Ephesians, yet none has gained widespread agreement. The main difficulties with most of them are their failures to identify or function as the controlling theme/motif of the whole discourse, particularly the large center section 1:3–6:20. Long lists some of these proposals:

> a eucharistic liturgy with exhortations, a letter of prayer as a manifesto of love and mission, a letter as "the written equivalent of a sermon or homily," "a theologically-based, pastorally-oriented letter" which combines various literary influences, an occasional letter addressing the reality of spiritual warfare prevalent in Asia minor, a letter with mixed rhetoric of demonstrative and deliberative, or an epideictic homily featuring Asiatic rhetorical style.[10]

The above list of proposed genres of Ephesians have highlighted some aspects of the discourse or the body section (1:3–6:20) but are insufficient to elucidate other areas or the epistle as a whole. For example, there are only two pericopes focusing on prayer in Ephesians so that to call it "a letter of prayer" or to emphasize love as its manifesto neglects the other themes and sections that make up the discourse and that are equally important.[11] Likewise, while the prevalence of magical practices in Asia Minor, especially Ephesus, provides ground for Clinton E. Arnold to suggest this is the background of Ephesians, it seems he might have over-

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[9] This is not discounting Ephesians' current lack of concrete context.

[10] Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 117–18. Long's sources include John C. Kirby, *Ephesians, Baptism and Pentecost: An Inquiry into the Structure and Purpose of the Epistle to the Ephesians* (London: SPCK, 1968); Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 56, 58; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, xxxix; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Ephesians: A Commentary*, trans. Helen Heron (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 23; Best, *Ephesians*, 61–63; Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic*, 167; Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 222–23.

[11] Kirby, *Ephesians*, 126–31.

emphasized spiritual powers over human powers as an equally relevant interpretation of "the powers of the authority of the air" in Eph 2:2.[12] In response to Arnold's thesis, Muddiman is right when he states in relation to the use of "principalities and powers" that "too much of the rest of the letter is left untouched by them."[13] On another note, Rudolf Schnackenburg's view that Ephesians is "a theologically-based, pastorally-oriented letter" is too general to shed any new light on the discourse.[14]

It can be seen that five of the six proposals listed above identify Ephesians as a letter. This is not surprising, since the books of the Pauline corpus are known to comprise features of the epistolary genre.[15] Ephesians does exhibit a number of features of that format: 1) greeting and farewell formulas in the opening and closing sections (1:1–2; 6:23–24); 2) the identities of the author (Paul; 1:1), the recipients (the saints and faithful ones; 1:1), and the letter-bearer who could very well be the reader and interpreter of the discourse (Tychicus; 6:21–22); 3) the large center section commonly known as the body middle (1:3–6:20); and 4) the uses of linking and transiting devices διὸ, διὰ τοῦτο, οὖν, and τούτου χάριν (1:15; 2:11, 19; 3:1, 14; 4:1, 8, 17, 25; 5:1, 7, 14, 17; 6:13), the verb παρακαλέω at strategic places (4:1, 17; 5:1, 7, 15), and the interjection "finally" (τοῦ λοιποῦ) to indicate closing remarks (6:10). However, certain components of

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[12] Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic*, 44, 47–51. Cf. Walter Wink who thinks "that almost every extant pre-Christian use of *archē* and *archōn* refers to the role played by some human agent in the exercise of office," and states "[t]here is … no distinctive pattern … for human or for spiritual beings, apart from the vast preponderance being human" (*Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament*, The Powers 1 [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 14–15).

[13] Muddiman, *Epistle*, 15. See also Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 101.

[14] Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, 23.

[15] The general features consist of: opening, introductory thanksgiving or blessing, body, and closing; with the use of other literary traditions, liturgical forms, and Greco-Roman rhetorical styles (Peter Thomas O'Brien, "Letters, Letter Forms," *DPL* 550–53).

epistles usually found in other Pauline letters are missing from Ephesians: the personal greeting that normally follows the opening section, and the letter occasion and/or the congregational problem. In addition, partitioning of the body middle into what scholars label as "theology" (1:3–3:21) and "ethics" or *paraenesis* (4:1–6:20) could not be adequately explained by "epistolary analysis."[16] On the other hand, Paul's prayers for his audience (1:15–19; 3:1, 14–19) and references to his roles as prisoner of the Lord Jesus (3:1; 4:1), steward of God's grace (3:2), minister and messenger of the gospel to the Gentiles (3:7–10), and ambassador in chains (6:20) add pathos to the discourse and establish Paul's credibility and authority for exhorting them to live morally excellent and holy lives.[17] These might in some way compensate for those lost components.

Scholars differ on the standard format and features that could define the epistolary genre.[18] Stanley K. Stowers does not provide a conclusive list of features although he identifies six epistolary types from ancient Greco-Roman letters.[19] David E. Aune states, "The letter form

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[16] Jeal, *Integrating Theology and Ethics*, 15–27; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 61–69.

[17] Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 241, 270–71, 284, 346–47.

[18] Troy W. Martin surveys the issues, methods, and approaches of Francis Xavier Exler, Heikki Koskenniemi, John L. White, Abraham J. Malherbe, and Hans Dieter Betz ("Investigating the Pauline Letter Body: Issues, Methods, and Approaches," in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, ed. Sean A. Adams and Stanley E. Porter, Pauline Studies 6 [Leiden: Brill, 2010], 185–212). William G. Doty, David E. Aune, and John L. White propose different combinations of epistolary elements (William G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity*, Guides to biblical scholarship: New Testament series [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973], 27; David E. Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*, Library of Early Christianity 8 [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987], 183–91; John L. White, "Ancient Greek Letters," in *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament: Selected Forms and Genres*, ed. David E. Aune, Sources for biblical study 21 [Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987], 88–95; Young Chul Whang, "Paul's Letter Paraenesis," in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, ed. Sean A. Adams and Stanley E. Porter, Pauline Studies 6 [Leiden: Brill, 2010], 253–68).

[19] Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Library of Early Christianity 5 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 51–173. The six epistolary types are: letters of friendship; family letters; letters of praise and blame; letters of exhortation and advice; letters of mediation; and accusing, apologetic, and accounting letters.

exhibited great flexibility in the ancient world,"[20] and "The 'letter' was the most popular literary form in early Christianity. It is also the most problematic since it exhibits more variety and flexibility than any other literary form."[21] Identifying epistolary format is not enough. Even if all the elements of the epistolary format are accounted for, it is more important to explain what the letter is doing. The analyses of Stowers and Aune show that the main controlling content in the body middle greatly determines the letter type or the letter's function and purpose.[22] Thus, while Ephesians exhibits some epistolary features, a theme/motif that could satisfy the whole discourse especially of its body section and produce fruitful exegesis of most of the text has yet to be proposed.

Ephesians also displays the uses of rhetorical styles and elements. Lincoln's and Roy Jeal's recognitions of epideictic and deliberative rhetoric in Ephesians lead them to propose the sermon genre for it.[23] Ben Witherington III, considering Paul's letters as "rhetorical speeches within an epistolary framework and with some epistolary features,"[24] judges Ephesians as a homily solely on the presence of epideictic rhetoric in the discourse.[25] The sermon genre is an enticing option, since Ephesians like other Pauline letters was written to encourage, minister to, instruct, and admonish the early believers and churches. Since discourses were delivered orally,

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[20] Aune, *NT in Its Literary Environment*, 158.

[21] Ibid., 159.

[22] Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 51–173; Aune, *NT in Its Literary Environment*, 158–225.

[23] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, xxxvi–xlvii; Jeal, *Integrating Theology and Ethics*, 27–29, 40–43, 50–51.

[24] Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 123.

[25] Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 4–17, 215–23. He rejects the notion that Ephesians is a letter (3, 217–19).

possibly even performed, in Paul's era, rhetorical analysis of stylistic elements like repetition, alliteration, synonyms, metaphors, amplifications, chiasms, and lists helps us appreciate the aural effects that these elements could produce, i.e. they emphasize themes and aid memorizing.[26] The presence of many of these stylistic elements in Ephesians demonstrates its author's knowledge, skill, and intention to communicate his message through rhetorical styles and strategies. However, the sermon or homily seems too myopic just because it reflects rhetorical styles and features. From the rhetorical point of view, Ephesians as a type of ancient rhetorical discourse seems more palpable than strictly confining it to a sermon, which remains a possible alternative. Still, rhetorical outlines of Ephesians differ.[27]

It is apparent that thus far there is no consensus yet about Ephesians' genre that could adequately explain the entire discourse, especially the material in the body middle section. This work recognizes the presence of epistolary and rhetorical elements in Ephesians, yet also judges that these framing devices and stylistic features are insufficient to determine the *topoi*, or theme/motif of the discourse. Stowers' analysis of Greco-Roman letters demonstrates what Aune rightly states, "An important but neglected subject is the identification and comparative study of epistolary *topoi*, i.e., the themes and constituent motifs used in ancient letters."[28] Hans-Josef Klauck states, "A topos is literally a 'place' where one finds themes and arguments, then also a 'commonplace' that encapsulates a cluster of motifs and figures applicable to a certain

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[26] Witherington, *Paul Quest*, 125; Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 7–9, 219–23.

[27] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, xliii–xliv; Jeal, *Integrating Theology and Ethics*, 62–67; Witherington, *Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 20–21; Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 285. These differences include the presence of the *propositio*, *partitio* and *probatio*, and the start and end of the *narratio*.

[28] Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 51–173; Aune, *NT in Its Literary Environment*, 189.

situation."[29] Recognizing Ephesians' other distinctive features that are characteristic of another type of ancient writing convention would contribute to understanding its *topoi*, thereby locating its function, purpose, and context. As will be demonstrated through the rest of this work, scholars have not fully elucidated the honorific features of the discourse or methodically associated the honorific concepts of Christ with those of the Caesars in Ephesians.[30] As a result, commentators often lacked the essential cognitive environment to recognize the honorific concepts of the explicatures of Christ.

A more viable solution this research proposes is to read Ephesians as an epistolary honorific discourse. Danker in his epigraphic study of honorific inscriptions has demonstrated the prevalent culture of benefaction and practice of honoring benefactors in Greco-Roman times. He presents and analyzes many epigraphic evidences of honorific decrees and identifies their common features.[31] These inscriptions on stones "have been set up in honor of deities, emperors, local administrators and … philanthropies."[32] Winter also attests the public nature of such honors during the NT era and that it was a "long-established social custom of appropriate recognition of public benefactors … not only confined to the Greek and Hellenistic periods but … remained …

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[29] Hans-Josef Klauck and Daniel P. Bailey, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 190.

[30] Witherington only mentions that in Eph 6:20, Paul's role as ambassador in chains "connotes both an honorable status and a shameful state or condition. Normally an ambassador had diplomatic immunity, but not Paul the ambassador of Christ. In the Roman Empire the imprisonment of an ambassador would be seen as a direct affront to the one who sent him. … [I]n a sense Paul inverts the usual understanding of status, considering it an honor to be in chains for such a king" (*Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians*, 355).

[31] Frederick W. Danker, "On Stones and Benefactors," *CurTM* 8.6 (1981): 351–56; Danker, *Benefactor*.

[32] Danker, "Stones and Benefactors," 352–53.

vital to the well-being of Greek cities in the Roman empire."[33] In this "widespread convention of promising public recognition to intending benefactors," Winter asserts that Paul views "the ruler … as God's vicegerent when he officially recognizes the benefactor with praise," and that the author of 1 Peter 2:14–16 encourages Christians to do good as "the means of establishing Christian credibility in social relationships as well as in the political sphere" since "public benefactions are commended to Christians as God's will."[34] Winter's latest work develops the divine honors that were attributed to the Caesars and proposes how the first Christians might have responded to it.[35]

Richard A. Burridge highlights two perspectives of genre levels that are operative in readers to enable them to endorse a work as belonging to a certain genre.[36] One is proposed by E. D. Hirsch in which "genre starts at the broad, heuristic level, open to correction; becomes defined more exactly at the intrinsic level where reading confirms or corrects our initial expectations; and proceeds on to the actual, unique meaning of this particular text."[37] Another is Alastair Fowler's view that genre, "a group about which there is general agreement in terms of historical origins and shared features of both form and content, even allowing for variety and change," exists in the center influencing a higher operative level of *mode* whereby one could identify motifs and styles, and a lower level of *subgenre* in which a specific subject and content

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[33] Bruce W. Winter, "The Public Honouring of Christian Benefactors: Romans 13:3–4 and 1 Peter 2:14–15," *JSNT* 34 (1988): 87–103.

[34] Ibid., 90, 94–95.

[35] Winter, *Divine Honours*.

[36] Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?: A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, 2nd ed., The Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 38–40.

[37] Ibid., 39.

is determined.[38] I agree with Burridge that these two views interweave to "ascertain the meaning of texts through increasing awareness of their genre" and "illuminate both the understanding of the development of a group of texts and the genre to which they belong."[39]

Moreover, Burridge advocates, "Genre is … a group of literary works sharing certain 'family resemblances' operating at a level between Universals and actual texts and between modes and specific subgenres, and functioning as a set of expectations to guide interpretation."[40] He further lists the external and internal features of a work that would help identify its genre resemblance, of which he judges that the former group (comprising mode of representation, metre, size and length, structure or sequence, scale, literary units, use of sources, and methods of characterization) is more influential and determinative than the latter group (consisting of setting, topics/motifs, style, tone/mood/attitude/values, quality of characterization, social setting and occasion, and authorial intention and purpose) for genre classification.[41] Based on Burridge's principle, for a work to be classified in a certain genre, the degree of variation (or conformity) of

[38] Ibid., 39–40.

[39] Ibid., 40.

[40] Ibid., 40–41.

[41] Ibid., 113–22. Of external features, Burridge summarizes, "Through the analysis of all these external features, a clear patter will emerge. Some features may be required by convention, such as mode of representation, metre and size. Other features may be common to a number of genres, but help to put together a family resemblance between works of the same genre, confirming the initial generic indication gained from the opening features. Similar works of the same genre exhibit a certain structure, on a broad or narrow scale, using certain sorts of literary units and sources, and displaying character by certain methods" (117). Of internal features, Burridge summarizes, "Few of these internal features determine the genre of a work. Many occur in a similar fashion in a number of differing genres, and so caution must be exercised in deducing generic relationships between works on the grounds of such shared features. However, in our wide-ranging approach, these features can play a part in helping identify genre if considered all together. Thus, no one or two features establish the genre, but the content of the work and its internal features play their part in building up and confirming the genre indicated by all the other features" (122).

its external features compared to that genre should be small (or close) while its internal features function to support and strengthen more than determine its genre classification.

The argument from external features for Ephesians to be classified as honorific is reasonably convincing. The discourse's (1) mode of representation by way of reading aloud to the addressees, (2) cosmic and universal scale, (3) stringing of literary units together to produce the honorific schema and motif, and (4) method of characterizing God and Christ as benefactors through their actions/deeds and believers as beneficiaries through their honorable conduct, closely adhere to the honorific genre. Its structure bears a good degree of resemblance with honorific material and, despite not adhering strictly to the honorific decree, is distinct enough to be recognized by first-century hearers as similar to the honorific genre. As for size and length, most honorific decrees are short. However, there are also honorific inscriptions and material that are quite lengthy, for example the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* and the Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus. As for sources, the use of OT Scripture and/or Jewish literature might not be attested in Greco-Roman honorific decrees. However, praise languge is often found in OT and Jewish sources also. Furthermore, Paul appears free to change his OT sources to blend into his discourse content and suit his purpose in Ephesians. As such, the use of OT material is deemed expected of and natural to Paul as a Jew than as a point of departure for Ephesians to belong in the honorific genre. Thus, the strength of the external features is relatively strong.

From a broad heuristic to narrow focused reading and from the examination of particular pericopes and content that reveal the overarching motif of our discourse, Ephesians fits in the honorific genre as demonstrated by its schema and honor/dishonor motif (to be presented later) that depict the progressive revelation of who is honored for what and what are the expected honorable responses of the beneficiaries. The schema comprises four internal features listed by

Burridge, namely, the honorific motif, the style of the vocabulary and language, the elevated presence of praise and honor attitude/tone/value, and the characterization of God and Jesus Christ as the honorands and believers as beneficiaries. The other internal features of setting, occasion, and authorial intent and purpose are to be ascertained in the following work. As such, the argument from internal features can be considered strong. Therefore, the external and internal features of Ephesians present a strong case that the discourse qualifies to belong in the honorific genre.

Danker concludes from his study, "No document in the New Testament bears such close resemblance in its periodic style to the rhetoric of inscriptions associated with Asia Minor as does the Letter to the Ephesians."[42] Holland Lee Hendrix proposes the genre of an epistolary decree for Ephesians and that the literary form of 1:3–14 and the rest of the discourse coheres with Greco-Roman honorific decrees honoring benefactors in the first century.[43] While Hendrix bases his proposal on a dated version of the "Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus and Decrees by Asians Concerning the Provincial Calendar," Long offers a fresh translation and new insights into the stunning "similarities of lexical correspondences and the corresponding similarities of the network of benefaction in comparison/contrast to Eph 1:3–14" and the use of many other words in the rest of the discourse that are pragmatically similar to those found in other honorific inscriptions and coins, "key features of Roman imperial ideology and its implementation as propaganda."[44] Charles H. Talbert, recognizing that Ephesians does not conform strictly to the

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[42] Danker, *Benefactor*, 451.

[43] Hendrix, "Ephesians," 9.

[44] Ibid., 6–7; Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 270–71, 276–304.

structure of honorific decrees, rightly points out that it "does breathe the … air of benefaction and reciprocity. It is difficult to think that the Gentile auditors in western Asia Minor would have heard it otherwise."[45]

Based on these works, this research affirms and supports with more evidences that Ephesians employs the Greco-Roman convention of honorific decrees and inscriptions structured in an epistolary format. The epistolary opening and closing sections serve as bookends framing the discourse.[46] Ephesians' epideictic and deliberative styles of rhetorical communication identify it is a type of ancient rhetorical discourse. However, judging on evidences to be presented demonstrating that the structure and content of Ephesians, essentially of the body section 1:3–6:20, comport with Greco-Roman honorific convention, this work proposes that the epistle is more fitting to be classified as an epistolary honorific discourse.[47]

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[45] Charles H. Talbert, *Ephesians and Colossians*, Paideia: Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 24.

[46] Elna Mouton calls the "epistolary genre" Ephesians' "primary genre" in which other materials are "embedded" (*Reading A New Testament Document Ethically*, AcBib 1 [Leiden: Brill, 2002], 85, 133).

[47] Mouton's treatment of Ephesians' genre runs along similar lines of argument (ibid., 85, 133–37). Her conclusion succinctly captures the essence of the how the epistolary, rhetorical and honorific features of Ephesians work together: "Understanding the Ephesians document as an honorific decree embedded in the epistolary *genre* in my opinion further illuminates its overwhelming emphasis on different rather unique aspects: Christ's lordship, and his and the implied recipients' exalted position of power…; the heavenly dimension of the recipients' new status…; the document's alternative ethos of praise-giving…, unity … and mutual respect/submission … associated with those who believed that what He did, was for their benefit…. The author acts as mediator of the universal gifts of God's grace and love *in Christ* (1:3-14), and calls the readers to appropriate honor of God and mutual caring for one another … as possible expressions of this 'common good of the people and the glory of her patrons.' All these aspects function within the author's main rhetorical strategy of assuring his audience of their new status. This emphasis, as well as his use of praise as persuasive device, are typical rhetorical characteristics of an honor and shame culture" (136–37).

Honorific Features in Ephesians

Danker has identified many words frequently employed to describe (1) the profile of benefactors honored, (2) benefits bestowed by the benefactor, and (3) the appropriate responses that beneficiaries were encouraged to take as a way of honoring the benefactor in return. In each category, he demonstrates their usages in the NT.[48] He also examines other features of honorific material such as their structure and thematic pattern that are also present in the NT. Despite this bold claim, Danker only cites Ephesians seventeen times, six of which are in footnotes, of when honorific words or content are found and offers not one pair of "word-deed" pattern.

Since Danker's work, only Hendrix and Long have analyzed the presence of honorific material in Ephesians. Although Hendrix's focus on the form and ethos of Ephesians significantly positions the discourse in the honorific genre, he fails to strengthen it by leaving the remaining honorific data unattended. Even Long's offering of honorific content is limited to 1:3–14. Despite these scholars' contributions, much of the honorific features of the discourse remains unexplicated. This work thus fills the gap by explicating as thoroughly as possible the honorific features observed in the discourse. Below, three sets of features are presented to substantiate my proposal for Ephesians as an honorific discourse.

1. A Distinct Honorific Structure

Research into epigraphic inscriptions and decrees has led scholars to consolidate a list of basic structural elements that make up honorific documents. Winter observes that honorific inscriptions between 5th century BC and AD 2 evidence a standard literary form consisting of

[48] Danker, *Benefactor*, 317–486.

(1) a resolution passed by the counsel (βουλή) and people of the city to honor the benefactor, (2) a recounting of the benefactions bestowed, (3) an announcement of the honors that the city has agreed to present the benefactor, and (4) a concluding clause showing the city has fulfilled its obligation of gratitude and promising incentives for future benefactors.[49] Talbert references three other scholars and also lists the basic structure of honorific decrees as follows:

> 1) a preamble;
> 2) an announcement that a resolution had been passed;
> 3) identification of the one who proposed the resolution;
> 4) the eulogy, introduced by "whereas" and followed by the reasons for honoring the benefactor;
> 5) a manifesto clause, introduced by "therefore" and summing up the response of the people;
> 6) a wish for good fortune for the resolution's implementation; and
> 7) the resolution proper, listing the honors apportioned to the benefactor.[50]

He rightly observes that Ephesians does not strictly follow this structure.[51]

While Ephesians exhibits similar honorific structure, there are two reasons why its *strict* adherence to this format should not be expected. First, Talbert's list and structure apply for official inscriptions and decrees from city or provincial leaders to accord approved honors on recognized benefactors. Ephesians, however, is neither an official inscription nor a government decree. It is Paul's epistle to the saints and faithful ones in Asia Minor bearing a general epistolary format with a rhetorical strategy. As such, it should not be expected to adhere stringently to the structure of official decrees. Second, this structure is known to "vary, either by

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[49] Winter, "Public Honouring," 88–91.

[50] Talbert, *Ephesians*, 20–21.

[51] Ibid., 20–24. Talbert's work is limited to comparing Ephesians with royal letters like Ptolemy II's letter to Miletus (262/261 BC) that are dated, and not with the vast amount of honorific decrees praising benefactors. He eventually agrees Ephesians "does breathe the same air of benefaction and reciprocity" (24).

omission or relocation of some of the elements."[52] If the numbers of criteria are prone to change, then it is not reasonable to expect our epistle to fulfill *all* of them. On the other hand, as we will see, Ephesians in fact exhibits a distinct honorific structure.

Danker considers 1:3–3:21 as the preamble, and that the phrase παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς (4:1) introduces the resolution.[53] Similarly, Hendrix proposes, "Ephesians reads like an honorific preamble which cites an honorand's benefactions (in this case, those of God and Christ) followed by a resolution introduced by 'therefore I beseech you' (*parakalô oun hymas*)."[54] Hendrix indicates that honorific decrees could possess a "loquacious style," emphatically developing the profiles and benefits/benefactions of benefactors, at times in "one ponderously cumbersome sentence," before a "pivotal 'therefore' (οὖν)" shifts the focus and attention to how and what the benefactor ought to be honored with.[55] Ephesians' style is often described as redundant; and the grace, mercy, love and benefactions of God and of Jesus Christ are praised in the theological chs. 1–3 before the οὖν in 4:1 turns the focus upon the recipients' ethics. Next, in the ethical half of the discourse, 4:20–6:9 provides details of the beneficiaries' expected responses in honor of God and Christ. The beneficiaries in this case are the recipient churches and believers in Asia Minor. Talbert also affirms the section after 4:1 "can be read as part of the expected response of Christians to their divine benefactor."[56] Thus, an honorific preamble and a distinctive manifesto

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[52] Ibid., 20.

[53] Danker, *Benefactor*, 451.

[54] Hendrix, "Ephesians," 7.

[55] Ibid., 5.

[56] Talbert, *Ephesians*, 23. This would fulfill Talbert's fifth criteria: a manifesto clause.

marker signaled by οὖν in 4:1 establish the two main parts of Ephesians' honorific structure. The pericope 4:20–6:9 fulfills another element of the structure: that of the beneficiaries' expected responses.

Winter and Talbert both note two other elements of honorific documents: an announcement of the passing of a resolution initiated by βουλή, and/or a eulogy initiated by "whereas."[57] In Eph 1:3, εὐλογητός, ὁ εὐλογήσας, and εὐλογίᾳ adequately function in the place of "whereas" to signal the start of the eulogy. This is a significant introduction to the "preamble that rings numerous changes on the benefactions of God in connection with Jesus Christ (1:3–3:21)," announcing the honoring of God, and functioning as the eulogy itself.[58] On the other hand, βουλή (1:11) differentiates Ephesians from honorific decrees in that while humans need to counsel with one another regarding whom to honor and how to honor them, God determines based on His own will (θέλημα, 1:1, 5, 9, 11) what benefactions to bestow, independent of human decisions to honor Him in return. In addition, καταβολή in 1:4 (πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου) asserts that God's choice of His people was before the founding of the world, antedating even the convention of public honors humans instituted. Furthermore, Long presents eleven features in which Eph 1:3–14 is similar to the Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus, consisting of "media, initiator, overarching benefactor, character of divine benefaction, sphere of benefaction, political ruler given, time frame, political activity, message, scope of benefaction, and anticipation of benefaction."[59] Paul in priestly prose is identified as the "initiator," and thus the one who proposed "the resolution" to

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[57] Winter, "Public Honouring," 88; Talbert, *Ephesians*, 20–21.

[58] Danker, *Benefactor*, 451.

[59] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 277.

honor God. Thus, we observe in 1:3–14 the start of a eulogy, the resolution announcement, and the identification of its initiator.

In sum, Ephesians bears a structure similar to honorific material but distinctively and uniquely designed by its author to communicate his intended honorific message. This structure comprises six of Talbert's seven basic structural requirements of honorific decrees, thus adequately fulfills the criteria. Apart from structural consideration, it is also important to identify "thematic patterns" and "linguistic expression in numerous modes and forms" commonly found in ancient honorific decrees that the "non-literary public" would be familiar with.[60] To these we now turn.

2. Honorific Words and Content

Using Danker's research as a guide to locate words often found in honorific inscriptions and decrees, a long list of such words is also found present in Ephesians. Many of them have not been previously observed or identified. Coincidence cannot satisfactorily explain the high frequency and occurrences of these honorific words. It is more likely they are used intentionally to effect praising and honoring of God and of Christ as benefactors and admonishing of right and honorific responses from the beneficiaries, the faithful in Christ Jesus. These words are observed in all six chapters of Ephesians, although more are found in the first three.

Firstly, 1:3–14 contains a high concentration of honorific words that ostensibly indicate to the recipients that the pericope and what follows are consistent with the convention of public honorific praises of benefactors.

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[60] Danker, *Benefactor*, 27, 29.

- Εὐλογητὸς, ὁ εὐλογήσας and εὐλογίᾳ, are blessing words from the same cognate group. Used together at the start of this important *berakah* pericope in 1:3, they function respectively to emphasize that (1) God is the Honorand and (2) the Benefactor and source of all blessings, and (3) the blessings He bestows.
- "Blamelessness" ἄμεμπτος often describes a benefactor's profile.[61] In 1:4 however, ἄμωμος is used to describe the purpose and virtue that God intends for his beneficiaries in choosing them. The use of ἄμωμος in 5:27 recalls this purpose but also functions as an honor code that the recipients of Ephesians were called to live up to as beneficiaries in response to God's benefactions.
- "Forethought" πρόνοια is a quality of deities that bestows good gifts upon humanity, e.g. "Pronoia Athena, Goddess of Forethought … [is] personified as a benefactress who shows 'concern and generosity' … toward humanity through her gift of Caesar Augustus."[62] In 1:3–14, in place of πρόνοια, Paul uses προορίζω twice (in 1:5 and 1:11) to emphasize that the God of the Lord Jesus Christ not only has forethought but fore-decision.[63]
- "Kind intention" or "goodwill" εὐδοκία very fittingly assimilates in meaning and resembles in pronunciation with εὔνοια, which is "a common synonym for εὐεργεσία and frequently connotes loyalty, especially to one's fellow-citizens or to people in a relationship of trust,

[61] Ibid., 354–55.

[62] Ibid., 359.

[63] Apart from identifying πρόνοια as the overarching benefactor in the Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus, Long also notes "fittingly does Eph 1:3-14 praise God's benefactions for pre-planning, executing and promising future inheritance of the formed holy people of God" ("Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 282).

ordinarily of a political nature."[64] It is used to highlight the basis of God's will and purpose in 1:5, 9.

- Ἔπαινος is a "formal commendation" to praise public benefactors in inscriptions.[65] It is repeated three times in very similar phrases in 1:6 (εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ), 1:12 (εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης αὐτοῦ), and 1:14 (εἰς ἔπαινον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), praising God's glory and grace for His benefaction blessings.[66]
- Ἐνεργοῦντος (present participle of ἐνεργέω, which is a cognate of εὐεργέτης)[67] in 1:11 introduces God as the One who continuously works all things according to His purposes. It also implants the idea of a God who is actively working among His people, and begins a series of subsequent uses of both ἐνεργοῦντος and ἐνέργεια that portray God's working that results in their benefit and blessing.
- Βουλή is a word referring to the city council that passes resolutions to honor benefactors.[68] In contrast, it is used in 1:11 (κατὰ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ) to establish that God's counsel and will are the bases of His benefactions. In addition, its cognate καταβολή is used in 1:4 (πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου) to assert that God's choice of his people predates the founding of the world.

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[64] Danker, *Benefactor*, 327.

[65] Winter, "Public Honouring," 89–91.

[66] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 278.

[67] Georg Bertram, "ἔργον, ἐργάζομαι, κτλ," *TDNT* 2:635–655.

[68] Winter, "Public Honouring," 88.

Thus, although the word ἀρετή is not used in Ephesians, the above list of explicit honorific concepts in 1:3–14 more than adequately establishes (1) the moral excellence, character and outstanding performance of God,[69] and (2) the honorific tone for this pericope and the rest of the discourse.

Paul's role in the *berakah* in 1:3–14 is established as the "initiator" to bless God the Honorand.[70] While Paul's thanksgiving and prayers for his audience in 1:15–19 are commonly observed to follow the standard epistolary style that combines Hellenistic and Jewish elements, they could also purportedly be viewed as Paul's honorific responses to reciprocate his audience's faith in the Lord Jesus and love for all the saints of which he has come to hear (ἀκούω, 1:15).[71] In this way, Paul would appear to respond honorifically towards both God the Honorand and his audience respectively in Eph 1.

In 1:19, Paul concludes his prayers but also continues to describe God's "working" (ἐνέργεια) of benefactions that he started in 1:3–14. The occurrences of ἐνέργεια at various parts of Ephesians indicate Paul's interest in identifying and differentiating the workings of different honorands and dis-honorands. The ἐνέργεια of God's mighty strength exercised in Christ and in the church are displays of God's benefactions (1:20–23; 2:4–7). These two pericopes intercalate 2:1–3 and strikingly contrast God's working against "the rulers of the authorities of the spirit of the air now working" (τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος, 2:2) in the sons of disobedience that Paul is dishonoring. The word ἀναστροφή is found in honorific

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[69] Danker, *Benefactor*, 318.

[70] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 277.

[71] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 48–49. Danker identifies prayers as honorific responses on behalf of benefactions (*Benefactor*, 400).

inscriptions to refer to moral excellence but its cognate verb ἀναστρέφω in 2:3 and its appearance in 4:22 are used to shame the lustful and immoral living instead.[72]

God's ἐνέργεια in Christ in 1:20–23 is also God's way of honoring Christ for all that Christ has accomplished in 2:11–22. Conversely, while Christ is fully deserving of God's great benefaction, humanity is completely unworthy but totally in need of receiving God's mercy and love (2:4, 7), and being made alive and seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (2:5–6). God's benefactions to mortal humans because of his great and surpassing mercy, love, grace, and kindness are to be praised (2:4, 7). While mercy and grace are typical characteristics of God, the quality of "kindness" (χρηστότης) commonly used to describe benefactors is also unsurprisingly used to qualify God's surpassing rich grace towards the church in Christ Jesus in 2:7.[73] Χρηστότης is often used in inscriptions to characterize benefactors. "The verb ἐνδείκνυμι ordinarily is used in inscriptions in the formulation 'show … goodwill.'"[74] As such, it is fittingly used in 2:7 to praise God's demonstration of surpassing grace and kindness to humans. Thus, Eph 1:15–2:7 closely tracks the workings of God and differentiates them from the workings of God's enemies (2:1–3).

Until this point in Eph 2, little is mentioned of the beneficiaries' worthiness (ἄξιος) or costs paid to receive God's benefactions. Instead, through the phrase "this is not from yourselves, it is a gift of God not out of works in order that no one should boast" (τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἵνα μή τις καυχήσηται, 2:8–9) and the repeated phrase "by grace

[72] Danker, *Benefactor*, 358–59, 388.

[73] Ibid., 325–26.

[74] Ibid., 372 n. 46.

you are being saved" (χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι, 2:5, 8), the audience learns pointedly that there are no costs involved or human efforts possible in order for them to receive God's salvific benefactions. God's giving of Christ, the Beloved, as head to the Church (1:6, 22) unsparingly and lavishly demonstrates the audiences' participation in honorific conventions whereby benefactors give from themselves at their own expenses, and "at no cost to others."[75] This quality and role of an "endangered benefactor" is explicitly emphasized about Jesus Christ also in 5:2 ("He gave himself on behalf of us" παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν) and 5:25 ("He gave himself on behalf of her" ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς), and is also vividly portrayed in 2:11–22.[76]

The verb μνημονεύω and its cognate are frequently used and attested in honorific documents "to memorialize benefactions."[77] At Eph 2:11, the audience is commanded to remember (μνημονεύετε) their former (ποτέ) and present (νυνί) conditions (2:11–13). Their transformation is because of Christ Jesus the endangered Benefactor who gave himself "in the blood of Christ" (ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 2:13),"in his flesh" (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, 2:14c), and "by means of the cross" (διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, 2:16). Christ abolished the law of commandments (τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν, 2:15a), which is the center of a multi-layer chiastic structure quite perfectly

[75] Ibid., 321, 333.

[76] Ibid., 417–24.

[77] Ibid., 436. Danker lists the rewards that benefactors would receive in return for their benefactions. The range covers wreaths or crowns, monuments like statues and portraits, privileges at games and of purple attire, taxation equality and exemption, public welfare and maintenance, citizenship and annual honors (467–68). Beyond these tangible rewards, other responses that Danker highlights as obligatory honors include (1) motivation for further and future benefactions; (2) demonstration of gratitude from beneficiaries; (3) attestation of the benefactor's character; (4) remembrance of benefactor and (5) moral resolution of the beneficiaries to imitate the benefactor (436–71).

framing 2:11–22.[78] Christ resolves the conflict between Jews and Gentiles and establishes peace, which is the priciest commodity of stability and security highly regarded in the Roman Empire and for which Caesar Augustus was greatly honored (*Res Gestae* 34–36).[79]

Furthermore, just as in honorific decrees, Jesus Christ's benefactions are phrased in political language and sacred spatiality reaching out to the public. "Strangers and aliens" (ξένοι and πάροικοι, 2:12, 19), "the rest" (οἱ λοιποί, 2:3),[80] turning them who were not "of the citizenship of Israel" (τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, 2:12) into "fellow-citizens with the saints and the household of God" (συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:19), and "founding one new humanity" (ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ … ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, 2:15), are political words and concepts often found in honorific documents to indicate the public outreach of benefactions.[81] The terms "to build" (ἐποικοδομέω, 2:20), "a building" (οἰκοδομή, 2:21), "an inhabitation/dwelling of God" (κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:22), and the phrase "growing into a holy temple in the Lord" (αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, 2:21) likewise bear similarity with benefactions of the first-century. Although Danker's list of honorable benefactions does not mention sacred buildings,[82] Arjan Zuiderhoek's study of benefactions from civil benefactors reveals additional accomplishments: Of all civil benefactions, public buildings comprise 58%, games and festival 13%, and financial

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[78] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 308–9. This chiasm is shown in ch. 3 as Illustration 3.1 on p. 107.

[79] Danker, *Benefactor*, 398–99. Inscriptions memorializing the Caesars are also often found in imperial cult temples.

[80] Danker interprets οἱ λοιποί as "non-believing humanity" (ibid., 377).

[81] Ibid., 336–37.

[82] Danker includes other equally important benefactions like relief from oppression and disasters, forgiveness of debts, liberation, restoration of peace, and prayers (ibid., 393–409).

distributions 17%. Of all public buildings, religious structures like temples, shrines, sanctuaries, altars, statues, comprise the greatest number.[83] Concerning monetary donations from benefactors, Zuiderhoek finds that most are not huge (less than 1,000 denarii) and large gifts of thousands of denarii are rare (the single greatest gift being two million denarii).[84] Thus, the depiction of Christ building a holy temple in 2:20–22 is completely in line with such benefactions of temple constructions. Although it was not recorded that Christ donated monetary gifts, his giving of his own life completely surpasses whatever amounts of finances benefactors could have offered. Thus, while benefactors were often called "good man" (ἀνήρ ἀγαθός), Jesus Christ is worthy to be accorded the honor of the "Perfect Man" (ἄνδρα τέλειον, 4:13).[85] He qualifies to be called "Savior" (σωτήρ, 5:23), a title commonly associated with "deities, deified heroes, rulers, and the immediate subordinates of rulers."[86]

According to Danker, some benefactors are "appointees of the government."[87] In this context of public service, he rightly states, "Paul understands … his mission to proclaim the Gospel to the nations [as] an assignment … [and] views his assignment to be a λειτουργόι of Jesus Christ as a divine benefaction."[88] Paul calls this assignment a stewardship and a gift of God's grace given to him according to the "working" (ἐνέργειαν) of God's power (3:2, 7). In

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[83] Arjan Zuiderhoek, *The Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire: Citizens, Elites, and Benefactors in Asia Minor*, Greek Culture in the Roman world (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 71–86.

[84] Ibid., 29.

[85] Danker, *Benefactor*, 318–19; Winter, "Public Honouring," 91–95; Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 298–99.

[86] Danker, *Benefactor*, 324.

[87] Ibid., 330.

[88] Ibid., 331.

addition, in a fashion similar but not quite to the same degree as Christ, Paul is also an endangered benefactor, being imprisoned and suffering persecution (θλῖψις, 3:13) for the Gentiles' sake, doing whatever that contributes to their glory (3:1, 13; 4:1) and being their ambassador in chains (πρεσβεύω ἐν ἁλύσει, 6:20). Suffering is recognized as a benefit that benefactors take upon themselves on behalf of their beneficiaries. The use of περιστᾶσις exhibits benefactors' ability to endure and stand firm in hardships.[89] While Paul himself has demonstrated this quality in Ephesians (as also in 1 Corinthians 1:1–12; 6:4–10; 12:7–12), he also calls upon his audience to stand firm in their struggle, as shown in the use of ἵστημι (στῆναι in Eph 6:11, 13; ἀντιστῆναι in 6:13; and στῆτε in 6:14), thus emulating Christ and himself, and becoming examples for the rest of the body.

As Danker and Hendrix have rightly explained, Paul directs the audience towards the honorific actions expected of them by admonishing them with "Therefore I urge you … to live worthily" (παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς … ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι), in response to the benefactions they received from God the Father and Jesus Christ.[90] Winter notes that the honors granted to benefactors are often called ἄξιαι and κατάξιαι according to the value of the benefactions received.[91] Thus Paul's audience, as beneficiaries, ought to conduct and behave worthy of the benefactions they received.

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[89] Ibid., 363–64, 409.

[90] Ibid., 451; Hendrix, "Ephesians," 5, 7–8; Talbert, *Ephesians*, 23.

[91] Winter, "Public Honouring," 90.

Paul uses περιπατέω five times to organize Eph 4:1–6:9.[92] In the first περιπατέω section in 4:1–16, Paul establishes the foundations that unite his audience and which they are to preserve. They are to be diligent or eager (σπουδάζω) in doing so (4:3). The verb σπουδάζω is a cognate of σπουδή that is used in honorific documents to praise benefactors who displayed enthusiasm in the public benefactions they render to their cities and people.[93] To do so, they are to use the gifts Christ gives them in supply (ἐπιχορηγίας) of each other's needs in order for the body of Christ to grow and build up (4:16). Danker notes that "the composer of Ephesians 4:16…prepares his auditors for the extensive discussion in 4:17–5:12 of Christian arete."[94]

Next, in the second section in 4:17–32, Paul uses μαρτύρομαι in 4:17 as an attestation with Christ Jesus regarding the new position and identity that his audience has already received in Christ (2:4–10, 11–22; 3:2–13) and exhorts that therefore they are not to live in futility of their minds. Μαρτυρέω is frequently used in inscriptions to attest and endorse a benefactor's character and performance.[95] Paul calls the audience to "be kind to one another" (γίνεσθε [δὲ] εἰς ἀλλήλους χρηστοί) as a conclusion to the list of twelve instructions.[96] They are to extend to one another the same kindness that God their Supreme Benefactor has shown them (2:7). In addition, the combined uses of ὅσιος and δίκαιος are characteristic of honorific material to praise benefactors. Not surprisingly, the cognates of these two words δικαιοσύνη and ὁσιότης are employed in the

[92] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 299.

[93] Danker, *Benefactor*, 320–21.

[94] Ibid., 332.

[95] Ibid., 442–43.

[96] Ibid., 325; Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 299 n. 149.

phrase ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας in 4:24, reminding the audience of the honorable and aretaic qualities they were created for and are to live out. Furthermore, benefactors were praised for their generosity and liberality, distinguishing features which believers are admonished to exemplify in 4:28, that they should not steal but work and do good to share with those who has need.[97]

In the third section in 5:1–6, believers are commanded to imitate God, walk in love, and not allow immorality or any impurity or greed to be named among them (5:1–3). Since πρέπω emphasizes the distinctive and appropriate performances of benefactors in honorific inscriptions, Paul uses it in 5:3 in conjunction with "shamefulness" (αἰσχρότης) in 5:4 to exhort his audience to be distinct and appropriate, as saints are expected to, and not to engage in shameful behaviors.[98]

In the fourth section of 5:7–14, Paul again uses strong and vivid words of shame to prohibit and command his audience not to participate in vice activities. He uses the contrasting word pairs "fruit" (καρπὸς; 5:9) and "unfruitful" (ἄκαρπος; 5:11), "light" (φῶς; 5:8, 9, 13) and "darkness" (σκότος; 5:8, 11), and "to expose" (ἐλέγχω; 5:11, 13) and "in secret" (κρυφῇ; 5:12) to maximize the opposing effects of holy living and immoral behaviors upon them. He also employs the word "shameful/base" (αἰσχρός) in 5:12 to emphasize the dishonorable results and consequences of vices. In these four περιπατέω sections above, Paul uses many words found in honorific documents to urge his audience to live as honorable members of their new community and to disengage themselves from immorality as a witness to the gospel and transforming power

[97] Danker, *Benefactor*, 332–33, 374 n.76.

[98] Ibid., 357.

of Christ in their lives. As the next section will present, he also structures his instructions using many thematic "word-deed" patterns and chiasms to emphasize them and make them more easily memorable.

In the final περιπατέω section of 5:15–6:9, Paul commands his audience to be filled with the Holy Spirit and not found in a shameful state of being drunk with wine (5:18). While he took pains to caution and warn them not to participate in vice in the previous four sections, he now launches into an extensive elaboration of what holy and Spirit-filled living in the Christian household looks like. He uses a final "word-deed" pattern in 5:19–21 (to be presented in the next section) as a heading of the household code in 5:22–6:9. In 5:22–33, husbands are to live honorably with their wives just as Christ does the church (5:23). They are to love their wives (5:25, 28, 33), to give themselves up for them, just as Christ the Great Benefactor (and other human benefactors) did (5:25), and to nourish and cherish them (5:29). Wives are to respect and honor their husbands by their submission (5:22–24, 33). Paul also admonishes children to obey their parents and fathers to nurture them in 6:1–4. This is a good example of familial respect, affection, and upbringing often encouraged in honor documents and a virtue treasured in the Greco-Roman world.[99] The use of τίμα in Eph 6:2 (quoting Exod 20:12 and Deut 5:16), adds to the honorific nuance in this pericope and enhances the possibility of reading the promise of long life in 6:3 as a benefaction from God the Supreme Benefactor. In his instructions to slaves and their human masters in 6:5–9, Paul uses εὐνοίας to describe the attitude of service slaves must uphold, just as they would in serving Christ their Lord, as "the obligation of the beneficiaries of the Lord." Εὐνοίας is "a common synonym for ἐυεργέσια and frequently connotes loyalty" and

[99] Ibid., 407–8.

exemplified by Nero's "commendation of the Hellenes." Paul's use of ποιήσῃ ἀγαθόν in 6:8 is an even more ostensive instance of encouraging good actions with the promise of honor and reward identical in honor documents.[100]

Last but not the least, Long researches the use of "in glory" (ἔνδοξος) in PHI inscriptions and finds that out of the 778 results, 493 are from Asia Minor.[101] As Long has shown, it would not be surprising to find more instances of the word being used in honorific inscriptions or in reference to the Roman emperor. Barth considers *endoxos* as possibly a revelation of Christ's love and power.[102] Paul's use of the word in Eph 5:27 to refer to the church fits into its use in the wider honorific convention. Long has also noted the use of the language of "grand, inclusive scope" in πας, and the language of surpassing in ὑπερβάλλω in Ephesians.[103] Although these words are not part of Danker's original list of honorific words, they are also employed in honorific material as evidenced in a Halicarnassus inscription.[104] James Harrison notes,

> The language of excess (ὑπερβαλλειν) typified the description of benefactors in honorific inscriptions. Benefactors 'excelled' in a range of virtues: e.g. good will (εὐνοια), benevolence (φιλανθρωπία), courage (ἀνδρεία), love of glory (φιλοδοξία) and honour (φιλοτιμία), greatness of mind (μεγαλοφροσύνη) and moderation (σωφροσύνη). … [I]n contrast to the honorific inscriptions…Paul usually reserves the language of excess for

[100] Ibid., 327–28.

[101] Fredrick J. Long, "Christ and the Ekklēsia: Σωτήρ of the Body and the Church as Ἔνδοξος" (paper presented at the Religion and Rhetoric in Antiquity, Union Seminary, June 21, 2013).

[102] Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Translation and Commentary on Chapters 4–6*, AB 34A (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), 683. He writes, "The Son … is not only political ruler ('head over all powers'), biological head (giving life and direction to the 'body'), priestly mediator ('offering himself,' 'making' and 'pronouncing peace'), he also communicates glory."

[103] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 293–94; Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues."

[104] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 292–93.

> the overflow of divine grace (2 Cor. 9.14; Eph. 2.7), glory (2 Cor. 3.10, 17), power (2 Cor. 4.7; Eph. 1.19), revelation (2 Cor. 12.7) and love (Eph. 3.19).[105]

In a separate examination of the use of πας in Ephesians, I have found that πᾶς, εἷς and ἕκαστος exert polarizing effects on the descriptions of Christ. On one hand, πᾶς amplifies Christ's rule, power, and authority over all forms and types of dominion and lordship; on the other hand, εἷς localizes Christ's lordship title exclusively so as to demote and delegitimize all other human and spiritual lords.[106]

These overwhelming quantities of honorific words throughout the discourse consistently emphasize Paul's intention to explicitly honor God and Jesus Christ and his interest to encourage his audience to live honorable lives in response to the divine benefactions they received. In the process, Paul consistently dishonors the presence of evil amongst them by using another type of honorific feature as discussed below.

3. Thematic "Word-Deed" Patterns

The third group of data observable in Ephesians that could account as an honorific feature is Paul's use of thematic "word-deed" patterns. Danker asserts, "Noble action in concert with fine words was a combination highly prized in the Graeco-Roman world," as evidenced in

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[105] J. R. Harrison, "Excels Ancestral Honours," in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity. Vol. 9: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published 1986–87*, ed. S. R. Llewelyn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 20–21.

[106] In my study, I find that πᾶς, εἷς and other quantity words are used together in the NT to produce contrasting quantitative effects for emphatic purposes. An example of this is published in Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 222–23. A good overview study πᾶς of in the NT is J. William Johnston, *The Use of Πᾶς in the New Testament*, ed. D. A. Carson, Studies in Biblical Greek 11 (New York: Peter Lang, 2004).

Homer.[107] According to Danker, such "word-deed" patterns could comprise the nouns λόγος and ἔργον or their corresponding verbs or "similar phrasing," often regarding but not limited in reference to the benefactor.[108] As such, if Ephesians is an honorific discourse as demonstrated by its high frequency of honorific words and distinct honorific structure presented thus far, would we not expect Paul also to have employed this "word-deed" pattern to communicate the honor/dishonor theme and to have used it repeatedly?

Samples of "word-deed" patterns in the Pauline corpus are found in Rom 15:18, 2 Cor 10:11, Col 3:16–17, and 2 Thess 2:16–17. Two "word-deed" sets observed in Col 3:16–17 are the closest examples to Ephesians. In the first set, Paul exhorts his audience to be infused with the word of Christ (**Ὁ λόγος** τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικείτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως; 3:16) prior to doing anything in the name of the Lord Jesus (καὶ πᾶν ὅ τι ἐὰν **ποιῆτε**… ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου Ἰησοῦ; 3:17). The second set specifies that all their doings "in word or in deed" (ἐν **λόγῳ** ἢ ἐν **ἔργῳ**; 3:17), i.e. anything they say or do, reflect their Christian excellence and serve as witness to Jesus their Lord. These samples show that Paul was aware of this common way of writing in honorific material and that he employed it strategically in his writings to audiences in different locales.

Indeed, nine sets of "word-deed" patterns are observed across Ephesians. Although λόγος and ἔργον are not always used or positioned closely together in these sets, other words of speech and of action function to create similar "word-deed" effects. While some of these pairs locate the speech and action words in very close proximity, others employ combinations of different speech

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[107] Danker, *Benefactor*, 339. See *Iliad* 9.443; *ChioxID* 20.6–8; 42.4–5; *SIG* 762.26–27; *IGR* I.662; *OGI* 339.14–16; and *IG* II.15–16.

[108] Ibid., 339–43.

and action words and could spread over one or two verses in length. Reverse arrangements of deeds/actions before words/speech are also acceptable. Danker does not discount this reverse arrangement, of which an example is Luke 24:19 that describes Jesus as a powerful prophet "in deed and word" (ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ).[109] What is important is the simultaneous side-by-side occurrences of words/speech and deeds/actions that create parallel emphatic effects upon each other to communicate the honor versus dishonor theme/motif Paul intents.

While "word-deed" patterns are commonly used in honorific inscriptions (since these materials focused highly on the honorable and exemplary speech and actions of benefactors), they can also be found in other literatures on ethics or of a Jewish or OT provenance (such as Proverbs) that might not have an acute honorific emphasis. The occurrences of "word-deed" patterns in Hellenistic honorific documents and Jewish ethical writings may not be surprising, given that both types of literature have a similar interest in noble/excellent and righteous/holy words and deeds, and exhort and encourage praiseworthy and God-worthy speech and actions. While distinguishing where these two streams of usages originate or how they intersect could be useful, these tasks would have to be left for future explorations.[110] As for how these patterns in Ephesians could be considered an honorific feature, I propose a few explanations.

First, these "word-deed" patterns are located in and work in concert with the honorific structure and significant large amount of honorific words and content to establish the overall honorific context of the discourse. While the first pattern in Eph 2:9 sets the tone for the rest, the

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[109] Ibid., 340.

[110] As my esteemed Reader, Dr. Joseph Dongell, suggests, "A reservoir of ethical seriousness about both words and deeds flows like a mighty river through the chosen people of God (Israel) into the early church and its (Jewish) apostles and their writings. The Hellenistic interest in noble deeds and words is a happy intersection with this stream, creating an invitation for Israelite/Jewish/Christian ethical interests to flow into some of the linguistic and literary forms of Hellenism devoted to similar ethical interests."

others, apart from their clearly ethical values, take on the honorific sense by being positioned after the manifesto clause of 4:1 and are viewed as honorable responses expected of beneficiaries towards divine benefactions received. Second and in continuation to the first, these patterns support and amplify the theme/motif of honor and dishonor that Paul had plausibly designed and intended to convey in the discourse. On one hand, they could be read as purely ethical instructions. On the other hand, they command believers to live noble and morally excellent lives as public witnesses to the transforming power of Christ who saved them from immorality and perversion. For example, in 4:25–32 they are urged to put aside falsehood, not to sin when they are angry, not to steal but work to share with the needy, speak words that edify and give grace, and be kind and forgiving. In 5:1–6, they are to demonstrate love through self-sacrifices and not indulge in sensuous misconduct and immorality that is not proper. In 5:7–14, their conduct in Christ ought to result in actions of goodness, righteousness, and truth that are visibly manifest to those around them and they are not to engage in secret and disgraceful deeds. Their holy and righteous lives would honor Christ their Lord and shame those who persist in immorality.

Third, Paul could very well be aware of the honorific and ethical significances of the word-deed formula and has effectively blended their uses together to achieve both honorific and ethical goals. Thus, we need not settle for either/or when it is more fruitful to target both. In this way, both Jewish and Gentile audiences would be receptive to his message whether or not they approve of his chosen genre, though I suspect Gentile believers might gain greater reward by recognizing the honorific genre used. Finally, out of the many OT quotations and allusions in

4:25–6:24, two coincide with a proposed "word-deed" pattern in 4:25–26.[111] Zechariah 8:16 could possibly possess a "word-deed" dyad in the first two parts: οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι, οὓς **ποιήσετε· λαλεῖτε** ἀλήθειαν ἕκαστος πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ. However, one must not forget the remaining phrase (καὶ κρίμα εἰρηνικὸν κρίνατε ἐν ταῖς πύλαις ὑμῶν) that seems to have an equal weight as "speak truth…." The two phrases ὀργίζεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε and λέγετε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν in Psalm 4:5 LXX could not constitute a pair since the speech word (λέγετε) is not directed towards any ethical goal. In Eph 4:25–26 however, the phrases that Paul has selectively quoted from Zech 8:16 and Ps 4:5 LXX form a fairly balanced set whereby "speak truth" and "do not sin" could compose a set of noble and upright speech and action towards one's neighbor. This leaves most of the proposed honorific "word-deed" patterns in this work unaffected by possible OT ethical patterns.

Summarily, the proposed "word-deed" patterns in Ephesians are significantly and strategically located within the rhetorical sections *partitio* and *exhortatio*. The first pair in Eph 2:9 supports the *partitio* and crucially establishes the tone and function for the subsequent eight pairs/sets, which are densely packed in four περιπατέω sections in 4:25–5:21 and in chiastic structures. Three sets are located in a chiasm of 4:25–32, two are in a chiasm of 5:3–6, and another two are in a chiasm of 5:9–14.[112] A final set is in 5:19–21.

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[111] Ps 33:2, 3 is quoted in Eph 5:19 but does not contain an action word. The other OT quotations and allusions either do not possess a "word-deed" pattern or are not found in a proposed "word-deed" pattern of Ephesians.

[112] I am grateful to my mentor Dr. Fredrick Long for alerting me to the presence of the chiasm in 4:25–32. The structures of 5:3–6 and 5:7–14 are my own work. Contrary to John Paul Heil, *Ephesians: Empowerment to Walk in Love for the Unity of All in Christ*, SBLStBL 13 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 187–88, 205, 217. My chiastic structures differ from Heil's, whose appear rather bulky and cumbersome as he tends to compact verses, sometimes up to five verses at a time, into one part of a framing bracket. Indeed, Long judges rightly that Heil's chiasms are "lacking in specificity and 'constructed' (not observed) to support his thesis across

Verses	Table 2.1. "Word-deed" Patterns in Ephesians
2:9	*Deed*: not by works (ἔργων) in order that (9a) *Word*: no one may boast (καυχήσηται) (9b)
4:25–26	*Word*: Laying aside falsehood, speak (λαλεῖτε) truth (25) *Deed*: Be angry and do not sin (μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε) (26)
4:28–29	*Deed*: No longer steal (μηκέτι κλεπτέτω) but labor (κοπιάτω) working (ἐργαζόμενος) … good deeds (τὸ ἀγαθόν) in order … to share with the one having need (χρείαν) (28) *Word*: Every unwholesome word (λόγος) must not come out from your mouth but only what is good (ἀγαθὸς) for edification of need (χρείας) in order to give grace to those who are hearing (ἀκούουσιν) (29)
4:31–32	*Deed*: All bitterness (πικρία) and wrath (θυμὸς) and anger (ὀργὴ) (31a) *Word*: and clamor (κραυγὴ) and slander (βλασφημία) (31b) *Deed*: must be removed from you along with all malice (κακίᾳ) (31c) *Deed*: You must be kind (χρηστοί) to one another, tender-hearted (εὔσπλαγχνοι), (32a)
5:3–4	*Deed*: Immorality (πορνεία) or impurity (ἀκαθαρσία) or greed (πλεονεξία) must not be named among you but what is proper (πρέπω) for the saints and shameful behavior (αἰσχρότης) (3–4) *Word*: or silly talk (μωρολογία) or coarse jesting (εὐτραπελία) which are not fitting (ἀνῆκεν) but instead thanksgiving (εὐχαριστία) (4)
5:5–6	*Deed*: Every immoral (πόρνος) or impure (ἀκάθαρτος) or covetous (πλεονέκτης) person who is an idolater (εἰδωλολάτρης) does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of the Son of God. (5) *Word*: Let no one deceive you with empty words (κενοῖς λόγοις) (6)

Ephesians. In truth chiasms should inform interpreters rather than interpreters forming chiasms in practice" ("Roman Imperial Rule," 119 n.29).

Verses	Table 2.1. "Word-deed" Patterns in Ephesians
5:9–11	*Deed*: For the fruit of light (ὁ γὰρ καρπὸς τοῦ φωτὸς) is in all goodness and righteousness and truth (9) *Deed*: and do not take part in fruitless works (τοῖς ἔργοις) of darkness (11a) *Word:* but instead even refute/expose (them) (ἐλέγχετε) (11b)
5:12–13	*Deed*: For the things being (done) in secret (τὰ γὰρ κρυφῇ γινόμενα) by them (12a) *Word*: it is shameful (αἰσχρόν) even to speak (λέγειν) (12b) *Word*: but everything being expose/refuted (ἐλεγχόμενα) by light is becomes visible (13a)
5:19–21	*Word*: Speaking (λαλοῦντες) to one another … singing (ᾄδοντες) … psalming (ψάλλοντες) … giving thanks (εὐχαριστοῦντες) (19–20) *Deed*: … being subject (Ὑποτασσόμενοι) to one another (21)

The first "word-deed" pair ἔργων-καυχήσηται in 2:9 is important in its arrangement, location, and function. First, its action and speech words are positioned very close by each other. Thus, the audience should readily recognize this ostensive arrangement as a common feature of honorific documents and be on the look out for more of this thematic pattern. Second, it is located in the *partitio* and it supports the discourse thesis that the salvific benefaction humans receive is a gift of God (θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον) and cannot be earned by human works (ἔργων) or efforts so that they may boast (καυχήσηται) about their abilities. Although human benefactors were honored and called saviors because of their exemplary words and deeds, they could never by their works attain the salvation that only God gives (2:4–8). As seen in the chiastic structure of 2:8–10 shown below, "gift" (δῶρον, 2:8c) is contrasted against "works" (ἔργων, 2:9a) and together, they make up the center of the chiasm (CC′). The ostensive contrast between the single proclamation that salvation is a gift of God and the multiple negations of human works and

efforts also highlights the exclusivity of God's gift and Paul's repeated emphases on the latter. The result that no human would be able to boast is paralleled with the fact that salvation is not of humans (BB′). These are set within the overall focus of the discourse thesis: Salvation is God's benefaction of grace and comprises God's purpose that his beneficiaries should live and do good works that he has prepared beforehand (AA′).

Illustration 2.1. Chiastic Structure and "Word-deed" Pattern of Ephesians 2:8–10[113]

8		A	Τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι διὰ πίστεως·	A: Benefaction of divine grace
		B	καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν,	B: Not of humans (efforts)
		C	ø θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον·	C: God's gift
9	*Deed*	C′	ø οὐκ ἐξ **ἔργων**,	C′: Not (human) works
	Word	B′	ἵνα μή τις **καυχήσηται.**	B′: No human boasting
10		A′	αὐτοῦ γάρ ἐσμεν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.	A′: Benefaction with divine purpose

Third, it redefines what deeds and words must mean for Christians in the new humanity that God has established, and sets the tone for the remaining "word-deed" pairs. After 2:9, the discourse continues to argue (1) God's purpose for believers as beneficiaries of his benefactions (2:10), (2) the benefactions of Jesus Christ through whom they receive salvation (2:11–22), and (3) why and how they are to conduct worthily in response to divine benefactions (4:1–6:9). Thus, on the basis that salvation is God's gift, all the other "word-deed" pairs located in the *exhortatio* in 4:25–5:21 would command and/or warn the audience how to live honorably through their

[113] For all illustrations shown in this section, words that parallel in concept in each frame of the chiastic structures are underlined. All "word-deed" patterns are demarcated by a box. In each pattern, words that refer to the "words/speech" and "deeds/actions" are in **bold**. The symbol Ø stands for asyndeton.

words/speech and actions/conduct, and to do so not as a means to be honored nor to earn their salvation but as a responsibility or obligation for the benefactions they received.

In the chiastic structure of Eph 4:25–32 shown above,[114] three sets of "word-deed" patterns are observed. The first set in 4:25–26 comprises the commands "speak truth" (*λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν*) paired with "do not sin" (*μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε*). The second "word-deed" pair lists the actions in 4:28 and the speech in 4:29. In 4:28, the phrase κοπιάτω ἐργαζόμενος ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσὶν commands the recipients to engage in personal physical labor and working (ἐργαζόμενος) of good deeds (τὸ ἀγαθόν) that earns their keep in order to legitimately share and give to those having need (χρείαν), in contrast to stealing. Such good actions ought to be matched with good word (λόγος ... ἀγαθὸς) towards the purpose of edification of the need (χρείας) and to give grace to those listening (ἀκούουσιν). The uses of ἀγαθὸς and χρεία are typical of honorific documents. Benefactors were called ἀνήρ ἀγαθός because their actions and words were beneficial to others. Winter affirms, "τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐργόν and τὸ ἀγαθὸν in Rom. 13.3–4 are used in inscriptions" and "the injunctions τὸ ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖν (Rom. 13.3) and ἀγαθοποιεῖν (1 Pet. 2.14) are used in epigraphy

[114] Adapted from Long's version which he first presented in a talk "Purposeful Lists of Paul in Ephesians" at a Men's Breakfast in April 16, 2011 and which will appear in his *Exploring Ephesians 1–3: Praise, Prayer, and Politics*. Contrary to Heil's chiasm of 4:17–32. Heil thinks 4:25–29 and 4:30–32 forms B′ and A′ respectively (*Ephesians*, 187–88). Too many verses are packed within them that make them bulky and the chiasm looks awkward.

Illustration 2.2. Chiastic Structure and "Word-deed" Patterns of Ephesians 4:25–32

25	*Word*	A	Διὸ ἀποθέμενοι τὸ ψεῦδος **λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν** ἕκαστος μετὰ τοῦ πλησίον αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐσμὲν ἀλλήλων μέλη.	A: One another
26	*Deed*	B	Ø ὀργίζεσθε καὶ **μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε**· ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω ἐπὶ [τῷ] παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν,	B: Anger
27		C	μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ.	C: Spiritual resistance
28	*Deed*	D	Ø ὁ κλέπτων **μηκέτι κλεπτέτω**, μᾶλλον δὲ **κοπιάτω ἐργαζόμενος** ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσὶν **τὸ ἀγαθόν**, ἵνα ἔχῃ μεταδιδόναι τῷ χρείαν ἔχοντι.	D: Works for good to give to the one in need
29	*Word*	D´	Ø πᾶς **λόγος** σαπρὸς ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω, ἀλλὰ εἴ τις **ἀγαθὸς** πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, ἵνα δῷ χάριν **τοῖς ἀκούουσιν**.	D´: Words for good to give grace
30		C´	καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως.	C´: Spiritual resistance
31	*Deed* *Word* *Deed*	B´	Ø πᾶσα **πικρία** καὶ **θυμὸς** καὶ **ὀργὴ** καὶ **κραυγὴ** καὶ **βλασφημία** ἀρθήτω ἀφ' ὑμῶν σὺν πάσῃ **κακίᾳ**.	B´: Anger
32	*Deed*	A´	γίνεσθε [δὲ] εἰς ἀλλήλους **χρηστοί**, **εὔσπλαγχνοι**, χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς, καθὼς καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ ἐχαρίσατο ὑμῖν.	A´: One another

to refer to the performing of public benefactions."[115] Danker attests, "The person who is χρήσιμος [useful] is one who meets a χρεία or need."[116] The third "word-deed" pair is in 4:31–32. It contains a set of negative actions, "all bitterness and wrath and anger" (πᾶσα πικρία καὶ θυμὸς καὶ

[115] Winter, "Public Honouring," 93.

[116] Danker, *Benefactor*, 325.

ὀργὴ, 31a) and "all malice" (πάσῃ κακίᾳ, 31c), intercalating a set of negative speeches, "clamor and slander" (κραυγὴ καὶ βλασφημία, 31b). It commands the removal (ἀρθήτω) of every form of evil actions and speech that results from escalating negative emotions getting out of control. The command in 4:32 for the audience to be people who are kind (χρηστοί) and tenderhearted (εὔσπλαγχνοι) to one another establishes an ostensive contrast outwardly observable between these right behaviors and the wrathful actions in 4:31.

Thus, in the chiasm of 4:25–32, the second "word-deed" pair is also the center DD´ of the structure. Works and words for the good of fellow believers are emphasized. The other two "word-deed" pairs (in 4:25–26 and 4:31–32) aid in the progressive comprehension into and out from the chiasm center (AB and B´A´). Through these three "word-deed" patterns built into the chiasm, 4:25–32 is not just a long list of commands. Rather, it is Paul's well-constructed pericope admonishing his audience that every word they speak must build up and give grace, be truthful yet forgiving, and not shouting or slanderous. At the same time, their deeds must exemplify good labor and kindness instead of uncontrolled emotional outbursts. By these standards, Paul exhorts them to live worthily and honorably.

The next two sets of "word-deed" pairs are located in a chiastic structure $A_1A_2BA_1´A_2´$ in 5:3–6 shown below.[117] It can be seen that each pair contains the deeds/doers, elements A_1 in 5:3a

[117] This structure is observed prior to discovering Stanley Porter's and Talbert's works. Porter's chiastic structure comprises Eph 5:3–5 ("Ἴστε Γινώσκοντες in Ephesians 5,5: Does Chiasm Solve a Problem?," *Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 81.3 [1990]: 270–76).

A: πορνεία δὲ καὶ ἀκαθαρσία πᾶσα ἢ πλεονεξία μηδὲ ὀνομαζέσθω ἐν ὑμῖν
  B: καθὼς πρέπει ἁγίοις, καὶ αἰσχρότης καὶ μωρολογία ἢ εὐτραπελία, ἃ οὐκ ἀνῆκεν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εὐχαριστία.
    C: τοῦτο γὰρ ἴστε
    C^1: γινώσκοντες ὅτι
  B^1: ὅ ἐστιν εἰδωλολάτρης
A^1: πᾶς πόρνος ἢ ἀκάθαρτος ἢ πλεονέκτης ὅ ἐστιν εἰδωλολάτρης οὐκ ἔχει κληρονομίαν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ

and A_1' in 5:5b, followed by the words, elements A_2 in 5:4a and A_2' in 5:6a. Elements A_1 and A_1' name the negative deeds/doers of the same root words, i.e. πορνεία/πόρνος, ἀκαθαρσία/ἀκάθαρτος, and πλεονεξία/πλεονέκτης. Elements A_2 and A_2' call out against negative words, i.e. μωρολογία, εὐτραπελία, and κενοῖς λόγοις. The first "word-deed" pair of A_1A_2 in 5:3–4 prohibits the sets of negative actions and speeches and concludes with positive encouragements towards proper (πρέπω) behavior and thanksgiving. It progresses from the negative to the positive.

Illustration 2.3. Chiastic Structure and "Word-deed" Patterns of Ephesians 5:3–6

3	*Deed*	negative prohibited	A_1	**Πορνεία** δὲ καὶ **ἀκαθαρσία** πᾶσα ἢ **πλεονεξία**
				μηδὲ ὀνομαζέσθω ἐν ὑμῖν,
	Deed	positive		καθὼς **πρέπει** ἁγίοις,
4	*Word*	negative prohibited	A_2	καὶ **αἰσχρότης** καὶ **μωρολογία** ἢ **εὐτραπελία**,
				ἃ οὐκ ἀνῆκεν,
	Word	positive		ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον **εὐχαριστία**.
5	Center		B	τοῦτο γὰρ ἴστε γινώσκοντες, ὅτι
	Deed	negative bad result giver	A_1'	πᾶς **πόρνος** ἢ **ἀκάθαρτος** ἢ **πλεονέκτης**, ὅ ἐστιν **εἰδωλολάτρης**,
				οὐκ ἔχει κληρονομίαν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ
				τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ.
6	*Word*	negative bad result receiver	A_2'	Μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς **ἀπατάτω κενοῖς λόγοις**·
				διὰ ταῦτα γὰρ ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ
				ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας.

Talbert adapts it to structure 5:3–6 into a ABCC′A′B′ pattern (*Ephesians*, 125).
A What to avoid: two sets of three vices (5:3a, 4a) plus one positive alternative (5:4c)
B Why avoid them (5:3b, 4b)
C This you know (5:5a)
C′ Knowing that (5:5b)
A′ What to avoid: three types of persons embodying vices (5:5c)
B′ Why avoid being such a person (5:5d–6)

The second pair of $A_1'A_2'$ in 5:5b–6 also begins with negative actions and speeches but focuses on the bad results they would reap and the respective giver or receiver associated, namely losing of inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God, and the coming of the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. It deteriorates from bad to worst. The phrase τοῦτο γὰρ ἴστε γινώσκοντες in 5:5a acts as a pivot/center B contrasting the two "word-deed" pairs: the prohibitions and admonishments in A_1A_2 against the drastic consequences of continuing with the negative actions or becoming deceived by the negative empty words in $A_1'A_2'$. Τοῦτο could refer to both 5:3–4 and 5:5b–6,[118] such that the pivot B could appeal to the listeners' prior knowledge of both A_1A_2 and $A_1'A_2'$. It lays the responsibility on them to obey the prohibitions and pursue the positive proper behavior and thanksgiving, as well as warns them of the dire consequences of choosing to live as idolaters or be deceived by empty words.[119] Thus, the two "word-deed" pairs A_1A_2 and $A_1'A_2'$form a frame of the chiasm with B as the center. This is another of Paul's well-designed structures with "word-deed" thematic patterns to instill right conduct and speech by shaming immoral, impure and covetous deeds and people, and explicitly recalling for his audience the disastrous ends of such actions and words.

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[118] Porter points out it could be either anaphoric, referring to what precedes, or cataphoric, referring to what follows, although he favors the former based on the "placement of the demonstrative before the verb of which it is the object," and "use of the neuter demonstrative, which is parallel in gender to use of the neuter plural relative pronoun in v. 4 in the phrase ἃ οὐκ ἀνῆκεν following the use of three feminine nouns" ("Ἴστε Γινώσκοντες," 275).

[119] Although Porter and Talbert both correctly locate τοῦτο γὰρ ἴστε γινώσκοντες as the center CC′ of their patterns, they have disturbed the intended written sequence of the verses 5:5b and 5:3–4 respectively. Porter removes the phrase ὅ ἐστιν εἰδωλολάτρης out of its position in 5:5. Porter justifies it claiming "It is … possible to establish chiastic parallelism without depending upon a single feature but upon the cumulative weight of several features represented in various formal and conceptual ways" according to the criteria "parallelism of content; form or structure; language, including catchwords; and setting and theology" set by D. J. Clark, "Criteria for Identifying Chiasm," *LB* 35 (1975): 63–72; Porter, "Ἴστε Γινώσκοντες," 273. Talbert breaks down 5:3, 4 and rearranges them in order to (1) fit his headings "what to avoid" (5:3a, 4a, 4c) of A and "why avoid them" (5:3b, 4b) of B, and (2) match A′ and B′ with the same headings respectively. As such, both Porter and Talbert fail to identify both the two "word-deed" pairs and their cognitive effects within each individual pair and in combination with each other (*Ephesians*, 125).

Another two sets of "word-deed" patterns are observed in 5:9–14 shown below.[120] The pericope 5:7–14 is closely linked to 5:3–6 as it (1) assigns the reference of αὐτῶν in 5:7 and 5:12 to "sons of disobedience" (τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας) in 5:6; and (2) prohibits participation with them in "unfruitful works of darkness" (5:7, 11), commanding the audience to "live as children of light" and "refute/expose" secret deeds instead (5:8, 11). In addition, two sets of prohibitions and commands with substantiations (in 5:7–10 and 5:11–12) within two chiastic structures (5:7–8 and 5:9–14) are observed. It is within these literary and structural contexts, i.e. specifically the first substantiation and the second set of prohibition-command-substantiation nested within the chiasm in 5:9–14, that the two "word-deed" patterns are found to effectively shame secret works of darkness and encourage fruitful righteous living.

In the first "word-deed" pattern in 5:9–11, bearing "the fruit of light" (ὁ ... καρπὸς τοῦ φωτὸς, 5:9) characterized by goodness, righteousness and truth substantiates that believers are "light in the Lord" and live as "children of light" (φῶς ἐν κυρίῳ … τέκνα φωτὸς, 5:8) such that they would be able to examine or approve what is pleasing to the Lord (δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστιν εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ, 5:10). On the other hand, believers are prohibited from participating in "unfruitful works of darkness" (τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ σκότους, 5:11b) but to "refute/expose" (ἐλέγχετε, 5:11c) them instead. In the second pattern in 5:12–14, works of darkness are prohibited because they are "secret deeds/things" (τὰ … κρυφῇ γινόμενα, 5:12a) too shameful (αἰσχρόν) to even speak of (λέγειν, 5:12b). Moreover, they must be refuted/exposed under the light that exposes and makes everything visible (5:13). In this way, the two "word-

[120] Contrary to Heil, *Ephesians*, 217.

deed" patterns in the chiasm of 5:9–14 (1) denounce shameful works of darkness, calling for them to be refuted (B_2B_2'), and (2) substantiate the commands to live as children of light by bearing fruit of light and to refute/expose secret unfruitful deeds by exposing them under the light (A_2A_2').

Illustration 2.4. Chiastic Structures and "Word-deed" Patterns of Ephesians 5:7–14

7		A_1	μὴ οὖν γίνεσθε συμμέτοχοι <u>αὐτῶν</u>·	*Prohibition 1*
8		B_1	ἦτε γάρ <u>ποτε σκότος</u>,	
		B_1'	<u>νῦν</u> δὲ <u>φῶς</u> ἐν κυρίῳ·	
		A_1'	ὡς <u>τέκνα φωτὸς</u> περιπατεῖτε	*Command 1*
9	*Deed*	A_2	— **ὁ** γὰρ **καρπὸς <u>τοῦ φωτὸς</u>** ἐν πάσῃ ἀγαθωσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ —	*Substantiation 1* A_2: Fruit of Light
10			δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστιν εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ,	
11		B_2	καὶ μὴ συγκοινωνεῖτε	*Prohibition 2*
	Deed		**<u>τοῖς ἔργοις</u>** <u>τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ σκότους</u>,	B_2: Deeds of darkness
	Word		μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ **ἐλέγχετε**.	*Command 2*
12	*Deed*	B_2'	<u>τὰ</u> γὰρ **<u>κρυφῇ γινόμενα</u>** ὑπ' αὐτῶν	*Substantiation 2*
	Word		αἰσχρόν ἐστιν καὶ **λέγειν**,	B_2': Secret deeds
13	*Word*	A_2'	τὰ δὲ πάντα **ἐλεγχόμενα** ὑπὸ <u>τοῦ φωτὸς</u> φανεροῦται,	A_2': Exposed by light
14			πᾶν γὰρ τὸ φανερούμενον φῶς ἐστιν.	
			διὸ λέγει· ἔγειρε, ὁ καθεύδων, καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, καὶ <u>ἐπιφαύσει σοι ὁ Χριστός</u>	

The last set of "word-deed" pattern is in 5:19–21. After an extensive list of ethical instructions using emphatic rhetorical structures giving strong prohibitions and warnings in speech and deeds (4:25–32; 5:3–6, 7–14), Paul turns to his final περιπατέω section (5:15–6:9). He preempts his treatment of the household code (5:22–6:9) with specific positive instructions regarding how they ought to live worthily in speech and action (5:19–21). The visible demonstrations of their being filled with the Spirit in speech would include (1) "speaking"

(λαλοῦντες) to one another in a variety of songs, (2) "singing" (ᾄδοντες) and "psalming" (ψάλλοντες) in their hearts, and (3) "giving thanks" (εὐχαριστοῦντες) always for everything (5:19–20). In terms of action, they are to "be subjected" (ὑποτασσόμενοι) to one another (5:21). The visible expressions of their Spirit-filled life, particularly in the act of mutual submission, should be reflected in their relationships between husband and wife, children and fathers, and slave and master (5:22–6:9).

Thus, these nine "word-deed" patterns are the third major honorific feature in Ephesians. In my view, they strongly emphasize that in the ethical section of the discourse, Paul's overarching attention is focused on admonishing his audience towards honorable words/speech and deeds/actions in response to the benefactions they received. These patterns are ostensive and strategic explicatures mirroring those found in honorific documents and employed by Paul as both honoring and shaming devices.

Thus, the above overwhelming amounts of honorific words observed within a distinct honorific structure and use of thematic "word-deed" patterns found present in Ephesians establishes, in my view, a strong case for the discourse to be classified as an epistolary honorific discourse. Following the explication of these evidences, a rhetorical outline that comports with these honorific features is provided on the next page, delineating the discourse in an honorific framework.[121] Moreover, a motif of honor and dishonor purportedly runs through the discourse in a fashion reminiscent of the honor and shame culture in the first century. This honor/dishonor motif in Ephesians is described as a schema in the next section.

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[121] In a number of ways, this outline is an adaptation of Long's original rhetorical outline ("'Taught in Christ' (Eph 4:20–24): Paul's Rhetorical Curriculum of Moral Transformation in Ephesians," *Reflections (Mishawaka)* 7.1–2 [2003]: 80–98). It has some similarity with Long's descriptions in "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 273–304. Contrary to Klauck and Bailey, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament*, 315–17.

Illustration 2.5. Rhetorical Outline of the Honorific Discourse of Ephesians

1:1–2	*Epistolary Opening*	
1:3–14	*Exordium*	*Praise God for benefactions through Christ his human viceroy*
1:15–2:7	*Narratio*	*God's honorific workings in Christ and believers*
	1:15–19	Paul prays for believers to know God's calling, inheritance and power
	1:20–21	Christ is honored by God's mighty working
	1:22–23	Christ is the head; Church is his body
	2:1–3	Believers were formerly dead in sin because of enemy's working
	2:4–7	Believers are made alive and seated with Christ by God's love and grace
2:8–10	*Partitio*	*God's salvation is by grace for good works*
	2:8–9	Salvation by grace through faith is a gift of God, not by human works
	2:10	So that believers would live in/for good works God has prepared before hand
2:11–3:21	*Probatio*	*Christ's benefactions for Gentiles through Paul*
	2:11–22	Christ's self-sacrificial benefactions for Gentiles and Jews
		2:11–13 Believing Gentiles formerly without Christ, excluded from Israel
		2:14–18 Christ makes believing Gentiles and Jews into one new humanity
		2:19–20 Believing Gentiles are fellow members of God's household
	3:1–19	Paul is mediator of Christ's benefactions to Gentiles
		3:2–7 Paul mediates God's blessings to Gentile Christians
		3:8–13 Paul is beneficiary of God's working and grace
		3:1, 14–19 Paul prays for them to know the love of Christ
	3:20–21	Glory to God for His exceedingly abundant mighty working
4:1–6:9	*Exhortatio*	*Believers' lives/conduct as honorable response to divine benefactions*
	4:1–16	(Walk) in unity and gifts (as Christ gives)
		4:1–3 Preserve unity of Spirit
		4:4–6 "One" creed
		4:7–16 Christ gives gifts for the body growing in love
	4:17–32	Walk not as Gentiles do
		4:17–24 Lay aside the old, put on the new
		4:25–32 Doing good in words and deeds
	5:1–6	Walk in love (imitating God, just as Christ loved)
	5:7–14	Walk as children of light ("Christ shines on you")
	5:15–6:9	Walk as wise people
		5:15–21 Know God's will and be filled with the Spirit
		5:22–6:9 Submit to one another in the household
		5:22–33 Love in marriage (just as Christ loved)
		6:1–4 Honor parents, instruct children, in the Lord
		6:5–9 Obey masters, serve with goodwill, as to the Lord
6:10–20	*Peroratio*	*Vision of honors for believers*
	6:10–17	Put on the full armor of God in honor
	6:18–20	Prayers in honor for the saints
6:21–24	*Epistolary Closing*	

Schema of Ephesians' Honorific Discourse

From all the honorific features evidenced thus far, a motif of honor and dishonor can be traced through the reading of the discourse. Eph 1:3–2:22, comprising one-third of the discourse, explicitly honors both God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:2). Eph 3 casts Paul as a mediator of God's blessings to Gentile believers before ending with a doxological praise of God in 3:20–21. Eph 4:1–6:9 exhorts believers to live lives worthy of their calling as an honorific response to the benefactions they receive from God and Jesus Christ. In view of the blessings they receive and the holy lives they live in imitation of God, 6:10–20 envisions believers dressed in the full armor of God, described with words of honors and virtues, and as a standing army firm in victory. Among these major movements of honor and praise, in a number of places throughout the discourse, Ephesians dishonors human and spiritual rulers and authorities including the devil and all kinds of forces that war against the church, deceptive teachings and delusions, and acts of immorality and idolatry (2:1–3, 11–15; 4:14, 17–19; 5:3–6, 10–12; 6:11, 12, 16).

The schema of Ephesians' honorific discourse chiefly honors God the Father of all believers (πατρὸς ἡμῶν, 1:2) and of the Lord Jesus Christ (πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:3) as the Supreme Benefactor. In 1:3–14, God is honored as the one who has blessed believers with every spiritual blessing. In 1:19–23, the working (ἐνέργειαν) of God's mighty strength displayed in Christ (1:20–23) is also directed towards believers with surpassing greatness (1:19). In 2:4–7, God is honored because he, in his rich mercy and great love, makes believers formerly dead in transgressions alive, and raised and seated them with Christ in the heavenlies. In 2:8–10, God is honored for his gift of salvation by his grace (2:8) and his work of creating the church to live and walk in and for good works that he has prepared beforehand for them (αὐτοῦ γάρ ἐσμεν

ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν, 2:10). In 3:20–21, God is greatly honored and glorified for his power that works (τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἐνεργουμένην) in the Gentiles, forever and ever.

Second, Ephesians honors Jesus Christ as the Great Benefactor to all believers, and towards Gentile believers in particular. Throughout the first three chapters of Ephesians, especially in 1:3–14, Christ is honored as the viceroy and divine agent of God's eternal blessings and purposes (1:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13; 2:6, 7, 10, 13, 15, [16], 18, 20, 21, 22; 3:6, 11, 12). In 1:20–23, Christ is honored by God the Father, being raised from the dead, seated on God's right hand far above all rulers, authorities, dominions and powers and every name that is named, having all things subjected under his feet, and being "Head" to the church (also in 4:15 and 5:23).

In 2:11–22, Christ is honored as the Great Benefactor for his benefactions of (1) suffering and dying on the cross; (2) bringing far-away Gentiles near; (3) destroying the dividing wall; (4) abolishing the law like a revolutionist; (5) killing the enmity; (6) reconciling and uniting Gentile and Jewish believers into one body (ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν … ποιῶν εἰρήνην καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ, 2:14–16); and (7) reconciling humankind to God. As a result, Christ is honored with honorific roles of 1) Peace and Peacemaker who reconciles and unites both Gentile and Jewish believers into one body (Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, 2:14); 2) a People Founder who founded one new humanity (τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ … εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, 2:15); and 3) a Priest who enables "access to the Father" for all believers (δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, 2:18) and being the

capstone (ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου, 2:20) in the building of God's household (οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:19) into a holy temple (ναὸν ἅγιον, 2:21).

In 4:1–16, Christ is honored as 1) the exclusive one Lord (εἷς κύριος, 4:6) in and for whom unity must be preserved in the church (4:1–6); 2) the all-powerful Lord who ascended on high far above all things (4:8–10); 3) the Triumphant victor who led captive a host of captives (4:8b); 4) the benefactor who gives ministers as gifts to his people for their equipping for works of service, building up of his body (εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 4:7–8, 11–12), and attaining towards unity (4:13); 5) the Son of god, the Perfect Man (τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, 4:13); and 6) "Head" (κεφαλή, 4:15; also in 1:22 and 5:23).

In 5:22–33, Christ is honored as the "Head" of the church and the "Savior" of the body (σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος, 5:23) who loved the church and gave himself up for her in order to sanctify her and present her glorious, without spot or wrinkle, holy and blameless (5:25–27). In separate places, Christ's self-giving and sacrifices made "in his flesh," "through his blood" and "through the cross" is also honored (1:7; 2:13, 15, 16; 5:2). Finally, apart from the titles "Son of God," "Perfect Man," and "Savior," and the metaphor "head," Christ is also honored throughout the discourse with the titles "Messiah" or "Christ" (Χριστὸς, 1:1; 5, 10, 12; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 12; 4:7, 12, 13, 15; 5:2, 23, 25), "Lord" (κύριος, 1:15; 2:21; 4:1, 6, 17; 5:8, 17, 19, 22; 6:1, 4, 7, 8, 21), and "Messiah/Christ" and "Lord" together (τοῦ κυρίου [ἡμῶν] Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:2, 3, 17, 3:11; 5:20; 6:23, 24).

Third, in 3:2–13, Paul describes his role as a mediator of God's blessings to Gentile believers: (1) being the steward of God's grace to them (3:2); (2) being made a minister according to the gift of God's grace (3:7); (3) humbling himself as the least of all the saints

(3:8);[122] (4) being the one entrusted to preach the good news and the unfathomable riches of Christ to the Gentiles (3:9); (5) being the one to bring to light everything, whatever is the administration of the mystery (3:10); (6) and one who suffers persecution on behalf of the Gentiles, whatever that contributes to their glory (3:13). These acts, in which the Gentiles become God's beneficiaries, Paul testifies, are according to the working of God's power (3:7). Furthermore, Paul's prayers and "bowing of his knees" for the Gentiles before God the Father (1:15–16; 3:14) is a posture that bespeaks of mediatory benefaction before deities.[123] Paul concludes the letter by seeking the Gentile churches' prayers that he would not stop working as their ambassador in chains (ὑπὲρ οὗ πρεσβεύω ἐν ἁλύσει, 6:20–21). Thus, despite not having met his audience before, Paul establishes rapport with them in 3:2–13 and in his letter closing (6:20–21) by identifying himself as their mediator.

Eph 4:1–6:9, the major part of the second half of the letter, focuses on the honorable ethics that Paul's audiences as beneficiaries of God and Christ are admonished to demonstrate. These exhortations are clearly instructive with the uses of περιπατέω five times to structure the entire section, four of them being imperatives (4:17; 5:1, 6, 15). As such, each command is introduced as an honorific action that believers should undertake to live worthy of the calling in which they have been called (ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, 4:1) and in response to

[122] Danker identifies humility and modesty as a profile of benefactors, with evidences from: *Res Gestae* 1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 21, 24 of Caesar Augustus being the chosen not self-appointed propraetor and regularly declining offers of honors and great positions such as consul and Pontifex Maximus; Esther 3:13b (LXX) of Artaxerxes; and 1 Cor 9:12 of Paul as a gentle benefactor with authority over the Corinthians but chose not to use it (Danker, *Benefactor*, 351–52).

[123] Danker writes, "Heads of state could count on their citizens to raise petitions to the deities on behalf of their governing authorities," citing Rom 13:1–7 and 1 Timothy 2:1–2 as examples in the NT (ibid., 400–401).

the benefactions they have received from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and perhaps implicitly from Paul the prisoner of the Lord (ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ, 4:1) on their behalf.

Conversely, Ephesians explicitly dishonors: (1) rulers and authorities that work in the sons of disobedience causing them to live in desires of the flesh that lead to death, which is the place of shame and powerlessness (2:1–3); (2) temporal man-made political distinctions and religious segregations that distance people from God (2:11–15); (3) the teachings of deception and delusion (4:14, 17–19); (4) shameful deeds of immorality and idolatry (5:3–6, 10–12); (5) the schemes of the devil (6:11, 16); and (6) all forms of power that are at war against believers (6:12).

This schema of Ephesians is based on the large amounts of honorific features explicated earlier. It develops the motif of honor/dishonor through Eph 1:3–6:20. God and Jesus Christ are honored, while their enemies are dishonored. Paul the author is also cast in the role of a mediator to the recipients. Most of the honors of God and of Christ, and their benefactions are elaborated in the first half of the body section, traditionally labeled as "theology." God is the Supreme Benefactor while Christ is the Great Benefactor. Christ's benefactions, authority, and roles and profile are elaborately described. Many of Paul's ethical admonishments in second half of the letter, the *paraenesis*, are phrased in thematic "word-deed" pairs and patterns structured in chiastic structures. They are honorific responses that the audience is exhorted to live out for divine benefactions received. Other parts of the "ethics" section continue to develop the benefactions, authority, roles and profile of Christ and depict the church as a standing army in the full armor of God described with qualities of honor from a victorious standpoint. Thus, the honor/dishonor schema and motif flow seamlessly across Ephesians 1:3–6:20 aided by all these honorific features. These honorific motif and features overcome the disjunction often

experienced by scholars segregating the body of the letter into theology and ethics/*paraenesis*, and adequately attend to the entire body section. It is thus concluded that Ephesians comprises significant amounts of honorific features and indeed proves to be an epistolary honorific discourse.

The clear distinction of benefactor titles between God the Father and Jesus Christ follows the differentiations in their roles and relationship to each other and their benefactions in the honorific discourse (1:1–14, 17, 19–23; 2:4–10; 3:10–12, 14–21; 4:6, 32; 5:5, 20; 6:23). In a number of places in the text, Paul identifies God the Father and Jesus Christ separately using the phrasings: "God our/the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:2; 6:23), "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:3), "God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory" (1:17), and "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father" (5:20). Most notably in 1:3–14, God the Father is introduced as the honorand-benefactor first. He is *the* benefactor of *all* spiritual benefactions (1:3), the cause and determiner of all who would become his children (1:4–5) and the recipients of his grace, purpose, and inheritance (1:6–14). The Lord Jesus Christ is portrayed in a supporting role as God's human viceroy. This distinction establishes God the Father as the benefactor prior Christ. According to Long, this also sets up a comparison with the Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus who proclaims Providence as the "overarching benefactor" giving Augustus the political ruler to the people.[124] When 1:19–23 vividly describes God's surpassing great power and might working to exalt Christ to the highest position of authority (1:19), to grant him to sit on his right (1:20–21), to place all things in subjection under Christ's feet (1:22), and to give Christ as head to the church (1:22–23), God's supremacy over Christ is made certain and

[124] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 276–77.

ostensive. After 2:4–10 elaborates God's grace, mercy, kindness, and salvific benefactions to all humanity, the focus shifts towards Christ's achievements and benefactions in 2:11–22 that explicate his specific works to bridge the Gentile and Jewish segregation. Christ's benefactions continue to be highlighted in 4:8–16 and 5:2, 25, maintaining a close relation to the church, while God the Father's role is still recalled (5:5, 20; 6:23). Thus, naming God as Supreme Benefactor and Christ as Great Benefactor is in being faithful to how the text speaks about them.[125] It also brings clarity to the layering of benefaction between them: that while the types and specificity of their benefactions may be different, the work of the Son remains fully in concert with and completely for the achievement of the Father's purposes and will for the Son and the church (2:4–10).

Summary

The epistolary honorific discourse of Ephesians in this research is built upon the initial works of Danker, Hendrix, and Long. The presence of a distinct honorific structure, honorific words and contents, and thematic "word-deed" patterns in conjunction with emphatic chiastic structures, reveal Paul's motif of honor/dishonor set in a schema honoring God as the Supreme Benefactor and Jesus Christ as the Great Benefactor. Paul's ostensive and intentional efforts to employ this honorific form in his Ephesians correspondence cannot be dismissed in the face of these evidences. Moreover, the discourse's honorific context containing Paul's explicatures honoring Jesus Christ is described in the above schema of Ephesians and outlined in the

[125] This work does not plan to discuss any possible differences in hierarchical or divine status between the Father and the Son as a result of such naming, or their possible implications. This would be better dealt with in a future exploration.

rhetorical outline (p. 90). It serves as the literary context in which Paul's explicatures of Christ will be interpreted.

From an overall perspective, Paul's adaptation of the honorific convention to compose his letter to the Ephesians as an epistolary honorific discourse stirs up questions about the common function or purpose of the honorific convention during his time, and his purpose for using it, i.e. whether Paul could be doing the same thing as other writers of honorific documents or was he achieving something else quite different from them. Ch. 5 discusses these in more detail to conclude that *Ephesians honors Jesus Christ at the expense of the Caesars, subverting them and delegitimizing their claims as gods*. To that end, we need to turn our focus in the next chapter to Paul's explicatures of Jesus Christ and how they are interpreted as honorific concepts of Christ in Ephesians' honorific genre and context.

CHAPTER 3. JESUS CHRIST THE GREAT BENEFACTOR

The previous chapter demonstrates that Ephesians is an honorific discourse embedded in an epistolary format and thus participates in the convention of honoring benefactors in the first-century. God and Jesus Christ are its honorands. God the Father is blessed as the Supreme Benefactor of all humanity and especially of believers, while Jesus Christ is honored as the Great Benefactor.[1]

This chapter focuses on how the explicatures of Jesus Christ in the discourse honor him. These explicatures are categorized into six types: function, positions, achievements, purposes, prerogatives, and titles. They are examined according to the set of testing criteria described in ch. 1 specifically highlighting the significance of their *volume and repetition*, *density*, *amplification*, and *strategic location*.[2] Although scholars have analyzed the words, grammar, and semantics of these ostensive explicatures in correlation with possible historical contexts to suggest their theological significance, interpreting them as attributes/concepts of honor in the honorific context of the Ephesians discourse participating in the environment of honoring benefactors has not been attempted before**.** This research proposes that these six groups of explicatures manifest

[1] Danker, *Benefactor*, 325, 331, 340, 350, 408. Danker writes, "God is the ultimate benefactor, whose goodness and forgiveness exhibited in Christ Jesus mark him as the exemplar of arête and therefore as the prime model for imitation" (350).

[2] See section "Testing Criteria for Triggers and Ad-Hoc Concepts" in ch. 1 for explanations of these criteria.

Jesus Christ's benefactions, authority, and honorific roles in terms of a formal "profile." Since these explicatures are found within an honorific discourse in a cultural environment commonly honoring benefactors, the audience would purportedly recognize these as *triggers* that contribute to forming *honorific concepts* of Christ through the six *ad-hoc concept formation* processes, namely *narrowing*, *broadening*, *category extension*, *reference assignment*, *disambiguation* and *enrichment*.[3] This new line of inquiry reaps fresh insight into Paul's systematic praises and overall portrayal of Christ as the Great Benefactor of the church and of humankind. Chs. 4 and 5 will demonstrate that these honorific concepts of Christ further triggered the honorific concepts of the Caesars efficiently from the *shared cognitive environment* of Paul and his audience; furthermore, these honorific concepts would have been processed efficaciously to implicate Christ's superiority and subversion of the Caesars.

Explicatures of Jesus Christ

The explicatures of Jesus Christ in Ephesians are grouped into six categories: Christ's function, positions, achievements, purposes, prerogatives, and titles. This section primarily demonstrates that the elements from these categories are repetitive, voluminous, dense, amplified, and strategically located,[4] and that each one triggers a certain honorific aspect of Christ (i.e. his benefactions, authority, and honorific roles and profile). The specific honorific concepts formed by these explicatures would be discussed in subsequent sections dealing with

[3] See section "Reconstruction of the Shared Cognitive Environment of a Biblical Discourse" in ch. 1, pp. 27–34 for brief explanations and examples of these processes.

[4] While some explicatures, like the prepositional phrases identifying Christ's function, are repetitive, voluminous and dense, others such as the "Son of God" and "Savior" titles are strategically located.

each aspect. Taken altogether, the pragmatic significance of these ostensive explicatures is enormous.

Christ's Functions

The first group of explicatures treated pertains to Christ's functions.[5] The name Ἰησοῦς and the title Χριστός occur individually and together a total of forty-eight times in Ephesians, signaling the author's intention to focus the audiences' attention on Jesus the Messiah.[6] Furthermore, as Table 3.1 shows, fourteen times the pronouns αὐτός and ὅς are explicitly used to refer to Christ,[7] and multiple ἐν and διά phrases that refer to Jesus Christ occur repeatedly a staggering thirty-one times within chs. 1–3.

"In" (ἐν) is the most frequently used preposition in Ephesians. The phrase ἐν (τῷ) Χριστῷ and other ἐν and διὰ phrases that refer to Christ bear instrumental and locative nuances. Though the instrumental usage is more pronounced, Christ's instrumental and locative functions are emphasized through these prepositional phrases.[8] A. J. M. Wedderburn is right to judge, "Nothing … has … indicated … ἐν Χριστῷ and ἐν κυρίῳ will be used in one way only in Paul's

[5] Barth observes in 1:3–14, "the passage bristles with references to the fatherly attitude and action of God, *to Jesus Christ's function and responsibility for God's people and the world*, and, at the beginning and end, to the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit" (emphasis mine, *Ephesians 1–3*, 101).

[6] Hoehner identifies that "the use of the term 'Christ' is very prominent in the book" (*Ephesians*, 108). Julien Smith also identifies the high frequency of κύριος, Ἰησοῦς, and Χριστός, and that their uses, particularly ἐν Χριστῷ, portray Christ as God's vicegerent (*Christ the Ideal King: Cultural Context, Rhetorical Strategy, and the Power of Divine Monarchy in Ephesians*, WUNT 2/313 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011], 174–207).

[7] This is only considering the uses of αὐτός and ὅς in ἐν and διά phrases. The actual number of times these two pronouns are used in the whole discourse is significantly greater.

[8] Murray J. Harris lists the possible meanings of ἐν Χριστῷ: "incorporative union," "sphere of reference," "agency or instrumentality," "cause," "mode," "location," and "authoritative basis" ("Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament," *NIDNTT* 3:1171–1215). Best states that instrumental and local meanings are the main thrusts of the phrase (*Ephesians*, 153).

writings."[9] Lincoln states that ἐν Χριστῷ is "[m]ost frequently … instrumental, so that it means 'through Christ's agency.' But there are a number of references where it does appear to have a local sense."[10] Hoehner's analysis however concludes that almost all the ἐν phrases referring to Christ are locative.[11] For Best, the instrumental usage applies for Eph 1:3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 20; 2:6, 7; 3:11; 4:32, apart from 2 Cor 2:15; 5:19. He judges that the predominant uses of the local sense "are fewer than with Paul" and that in Ephesians the use of the local sense is primarily "in corporate form" like in 6:1, 21. It could "lie in the background in many cases where the instrumental sense predominates."[12] My analysis coheres with Best that the instrumental use of ἐν Χριστῷ is judged to be predominant over the locative sense especially when these explicatures and the pericopes they are in are viewed in the discourse's honorific features and context.

These ἐν and διά phrases are densely employed in 1:3–14 and 2:11–22, reaching thirteen and eleven times respectively. Their amplified and strategic uses in these two pericopes and in 3:11–12 are marked by their occurrences in fronted and final positions modifiying key verbs, and in closely abutted positions to one another.[13] These are elaborated in the sections "Benefactions

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[9] A. J. M. Wedderburn, "Some Observations on Paul's Use of the Phrases 'in Christ' and 'with Christ,'" *JSNT* 25 (1985): 83–97. Thus, John Aitken Allan's total rejection of the local sense is untenable ("The 'In Christ' Formula in Ephesians," *New Testament Studies* 5.1 [1958]: 54–62). Cf. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 22; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 171.

[10] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 21.

[11] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 173–74. This is despite qualifying it with Büchsel and Neugebauer that "a uniform exegesis" is derivable from examining "its meaning from each individual context" (ibid., 170–71; Friedrich Büchsel, "'In Christus' Bei Paulus," *Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft Und Die Kunde Der Älteren Kirche* 42 [1949]: 141–58; Fritz Neugebauer, "Das Paulinische 'in Christo,'" *New Testament Studies* 4.2 [1958]: 124–38). See also William J. Larkin, *Ephesians: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, BHGNT (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 6–7.

[12] Best, *Ephesians*, 153–54.

[13] For explanations of Preposed or Fronted emphasis, Position Final emphasis, and Abutted emphasis, see Long, *2 Corinthians*, xxvi–xliii; Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*.

of Christ" (p. 115) and "Honorific Roles and Profiles of Jesus Christ" (p. 139). Thus, ἐν (τῷ) Χριστῷ and other ἐν and διὰ phrases that refer to Christ are used strategically throughout Ephesians, particularly in 1:3–14 and 2:11–22 emphasizing the Christ's agency and benefactions respectively. Table 3.1 shows their varying predominance in instrumental and locative senses. In either case, Christ's agency function is ostensibly manifested.[14]

Table 3.1. Jesus Christ's Functions in Ephesians	
Explicatures	Honorific Aspect
Predominant senses of ἐν and διὰ phrases referring to Christ as direct object: 1. Instrumental sense (manner, agency, instrumentality, cause, authority): a. ἐν Χριστῷ (1:3; 4:32) and ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ (1:10) b. ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (2:6, 7; 3:21) and ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (3:11) c. ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ (1:6) d. ἐν κυρίῳ (2:21; 6:10) e. ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:13) f. ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ (5:21) g. ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ (2:14) h. ἐν αὐτῷ (1:4, 9) i. ἐν ᾧ (1:7, 11; 2:21, 22) j. διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:5) k. διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ (1:7) l. διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ (3:12) m. δι' αὐτοῦ (2:18) 2. Locative sense (location, sphere of reference, incorporative union):	Roles

[14] I agree with Best, "For Paul the phrase [in Christ] may be said to have two main thrusts, the instrumental and the local, each predominating from time to time but neither every totally absent. These two thrusts still appear in Ephesians but with variations" (*Ephesians*, 153). The classification of instrumental and locative groups is in reference with Larkin, *Ephesians*, 6; Harris, *NIDNTT* 3:1171–1215.

Table 3.1. Jesus Christ's Functions in Ephesians	
a. ἐν (τῷ) Χριστῷ (Ἰησοῦ) (1:1, 12, 20; 2:10, 13; 3:6; 4:21)	
b. ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ (1:15) and ἐν κυρίῳ (4:1, 17; 5:8; 6:1, 21)	
c. ἐν αὐτῷ (1:10; 2:15; 4:21) and ἐν ᾧ (1:13; 3:12)	

Christ's Positions

The second set of ostensive explicatures concerns Christ's positions. These explicatures are densely packed in 1:20–23, as Table 3.2 shows. While they are not as numerous as the prepositional phrases mentioned earlier, they are amplified by being abutted together and arranged to vividly portray the progressive sequence of Christ's resurrection followed by ascension and exaltation to the highest position of authority. Christ's positions and authority in relation to all other groups of rule and authority, to the created world, and to the Church are emphasized through them.

The use of a list to group the power entities in 1:21 is a classic emphatic construction. The occurrence of πᾶς six times in 1:20–23 reflects the uses of words emphasizing quantity and creates an inclusive scope to the types of powers and breadth of authority that Christ's positions cover. The antecedent of ἥν refers to "working" (ἐνέργειαν) in 1:19 while the participles ἐγείρας and καθίσας in the same relative clause in 1:20 modify the verb "he worked/brought about" (ἐνήργησεν). Together, they exemplify Christ's resurrection and seat of authority are the "working" (ἐνέργειαν) of God.[15] These words strategically highlight Christ's position as a result

[15] Hoehner states, "The ὑπέταξεν is coordinate with the previous ἐνήργησεν (v.20) joined with the conjunction καί. The first demonstration of God's power had to do with Christ's resurrection and the establishment of Christ's position of authority. The last two are going to show God's power in Christ by Christ's dominion over all creation and over the church in particular" (*Ephesians*, 282).

of God's benefaction towards him. The phrase "not only in this age but also in the one to come" (*οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι* in 1:21) also demonstrates the timelessness and eternity of Christ's authority. The other explicatures of Christ's position are in 4:8–10 as shown in Table 3.2. They are strategically located between 4:1–7 describing the unity of the faith that forms the first rationale for believers' ethical living and 4:11–16 describing Christ giving gifts to the church. All of these explicatures regarding Christ's position would be discussed in the section "Authority of Jesus Christ" on p. 129.

Table 3.2. Jesus Christ's Positions in Ephesians

Explicatures	Honorific Aspect
1. Raised from the dead: *ἐγείρας αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν* (1:20a) 2. Seated on the right of God far above all rule and authority and dominion and power and every name being named: a. *καθίσας ἐν δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* (1:20b) b. *ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου*, (1:21) 3. Receives the subjection of all things under his feet: *πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ* (1:22a) 4. Head to the Church, his body: *αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἥτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ* (1:22b–23a) 5. Ascended on high (4:8–10): a. *ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος* (4:8a) b. *τὸ δὲ ἀνέβη τί ἐστιν, εἰ μὴ ὅτι καὶ κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς* (4:9) c. *ὁ καταβὰς αὐτός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ ἀναβὰς ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν* (4:10)	Authority

Christ's Achievements

The third group of explicatures is regarding Jesus Christ's achievements that portray his honorific role as the Great Benefactor and his benefactions. These explicatures listed in Table 3.3 are densely centralized and compacted in Eph 2:11–22. They are strategically structured and amplified through a multi-layered chiastic structure observed by Long and reproduced below in Illustration 3.1 in a format that aids visualizing the progressive movement into the chiastic center and out of it as the discourse is read.[16]

There are at least two similar and underlined words/concepts in each pair of elements between AA′ and EE′ of this chiasm. The element B (2:12) lists five old facts about Gentile believers that parallel five new truths about them listed in the elements B′A′ (2:18–22). The paired elements C and C′ (2:13, 17) repeat the same words "far away" and "near," reminding the audience of their former political and spiritual distance from the πολιτείας of Israel and from God but that in Christ and by Christ's blood and preaching of peace, they were brought near to each other and to God. Attention is drawn to the pairs DD′ through FF′ (2:14–16) as a distinct core group in the dotted box. One might imagine that the letter reader slowed down in 2:14–16 and, using hand gestures, emphasized Christ's honorific role as Peace and accomplishments of killing the enmity through the cross (DD′), reconciling/uniting both groups (Jew and Gentile believers) into one body and reconciling them to God (EE′), and breaking down the dividing wall, i.e. the enmity, through his flesh in order to found one new humanity in himself and making peace (FF′). At the very center G of the chiasm, the abolishment and denouncing of the Law of

[16] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 308–9; Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues." Cf. Heil whose identification of fifteen micro-chiastic structures in Ephesians including 2:11–22 that altogether form a macro structure of the whole discourse, is debatable (*Ephesians*, 13–45).

commandments in ordinances (2:15b), the ultimate result of Christ's achievements, is announced. In this way, the structure and impact of 2:11–22 are visually communicated and effectively emphasized to Paul's listeners.

Illustration 3.1. Chiastic Structure of Ephesians 2:11–22

11	A	Διὸ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυστία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου,
12	B	ὅτι ἦτε τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ ① χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, ② ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ③ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ④ ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες καὶ ⑤ ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.
13	C	νυνὶ δὲ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἵ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.
14a	D	Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν,
14b	E	ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν
14c	F	καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,
15a	G	τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας,
15b	F′	ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην
16a	E′	καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ
16b	D′	διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ.
17	C′	καὶ ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς·
18–20	B′	⑤&④ ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. ③ Ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι ἀλλὰ ② ἐστὲ συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ① ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ,
21–22	A′	⑤ ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι.

Table 3.3. Jesus Christ's Achievements in Ephesians	
Explicatures	Honorific Aspect
1. Suffering/Dying on the cross: a. ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:13), ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ (2:14c), ἐν αὐτῷ (2:16b) b. διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ (2:16b), δι' αὐτοῦ (2:18) 2. Bringing far-away Gentiles near: ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἵ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:13) 3. Destroying the dividing wall (reconciliation): τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, (2:14) 4. Abolishing the Law (reconciliation): τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας (2:15) 5. Killing the enmity (reconciliation): διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν (2:16) 6. Reconciling/Uniting Gentile and Jewish believers: a. ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν (2:14) b. ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον (2:15) 7. Reconciling humankind to God: ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ (2:16)	Benefactions
8. Peace-making, and preaching of peace (reconciliation): a. Christ is our Peace: Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν (2:14) b. Christ is the Peacemaker: ποιῶν εἰρήνην (2:15) c. Christ preached peace: ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν (2:17) 9. Providing access to the Father: a. δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα (2:18) b. ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ. (3:12)	Roles

Christ's Purposes

The uses of purpose clauses (infinitives or ἵνα with subjunctive verbs) and πρὸς, εἰς and μέχρι phrases ostensibly highlight the goals and purposes of Christ and his achievements. They are phrased in abutted constructions (such as in 2:15–16 and 5:26–27) or with verbs nuancing growth or building (such as αὔξει and συνοικοδομεῖσθε in 2:21–22). These explicatures presented in Table 3.4 are strategically located. The important overarching purpose of Christ "to sum up all things" (1:10) is positioned in the 1:3–14 where Christ's functions are densely explicated; four other purposes of Christ are densely compacted in 2:11–22 that comprises Christ's achievements; one is found in 4:8–10 that highlights Christ's positions with seven prepositional phrases tightly abutted together immediately after it in 4:11–13; and two are in 5:22–33 that compares Christ's relationship with the church to the marriage between a husband and a wife. Together these purpose clauses and prepositional phrases trigger Christ's honorific roles and benefactions.

Table 3.4. Purposes of Jesus Christ and of His Achievements in Ephesians	
Explicatures	Honorific Aspect
1. Clauses using ἵνα with subjunctive or infinitives: a. ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ (1:10) b. ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον (2:15) c. καὶ [ἵνα] ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ (2:16) d. ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα (4:10) e. ἵνα αὐτὴν ἁγιάσῃ καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι (5:26) f. ἵνα παραστήσῃ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἔνδοξον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν...ἵνα ᾖ ἁγία καὶ ἄμωμος (5:27) 2. Prepositional phrases indicating purpose: a. αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον (2:21) b. συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι. (2:22)	Roles
c. αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν... (4:11) i. πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, ii. εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (4:12) d. μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες i. εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, ii. εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (4:13)	Benefactions

Christ's Prerogatives

The fifth group of explicatures in Table 3.5 speaks of Jesus Christ's prerogatives. Christ's power and freedom to give is repeatedly observed in 4:8, 4:11, 5:2 and 5:25. In the first two instances, he gives gifts to the church. In the next two, he gave of himself. Christ's choice to

benefit humankind is more important than and demands him giving of himself. His motivation is purely his love for the church, not for his self-glorification or to receive reciprocal benefits.

Table 3.5. Jesus Christ's Prerogatives in Ephesians	
Explicatures	Honorific Aspect
1. Giving gifts to his people [instead of receiving gifts]: (4:7, 8c, 11) a. *ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις* (4:8c) b. αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους (4:11)	Benefactions
2. Leading captive a host of captives: a. *ᾐχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν* (4:8b)	Roles
3. Loving the church and giving Himself on her behalf: a. ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (5:2) b. ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς (5:25) 4. Giving himself and making self-sacrifices "through his blood," "by the blood of Christ," "in his flesh" and "through the cross" (1:7; 2:13, 15, 16; 5:2, 25).	Benefactions/ Profile

Furthermore, phrases like "through his blood" (1:7), "by the blood of Christ" (2:13), "in his flesh" (2:15) and "through the cross" (2:16) emphasize Jesus' self-sacrifices of his life. His prerogative to give himself is densely implicated in 2:11–22, highlighting again Christ's benefactions in the pericope. A different prerogative is singled out in Eph 4:8, that of Christ leading captives captive. Paul quotes from Psalm 68:18 but has modified the second-person references to third-person and has reversed the "receiving" to "giving" of gifts by the Lord. While Eph 4:9–10 offers a *midrash* interpretation of 4:8a "when he ascended on high" (*ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος*), and 4:11–16 develops the idea first initiated by 4:8c "he gave gifts to men" (*ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*), nothing is mentioned further of 4:8b "he led captive captives"

(ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν). The strategic character of 4:8b, however, is great and shall be elaborated in the sub-section "Triumphant Victor" on p. 157.

Christ's Titles

The titles of Christ make up the final group of explicatures. Titles like "Savior" (σωτήρ), "the Son of God" (ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ), and "Perfect Man" (ἄνδρα τέλειον) occur only once in the discourse but are nevertheless pragmatically significant. The phrases τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ and ἄνδρα τέλειον appear together as the climatic goal of the abutted πρὸς, εἰς and μέχρι phrases in 4:12–15, highlighting the ultimate purpose that Christ's gifts are designed to accomplish. "Head" (κεφαλή) functions as a metaphor and is included here in view of its similar impact as these titles in strategically manifesting Christ's authority over the Church in all three instances in 1:22; 4:15; 5:23.

"Lord" (κυρίος), on the other hand, appears twenty-four times at different places throughout the discourse referring to Christ functioning as his title. Christ's Lordship and title κυρίος and Messianic title Χριστός are used together seven times in the discourse, five of which particularizes him as Lord and Messiah of all believers by the use of the possessive pronoun ἡμῶν. In addition, the word κυρίος itself encompasses a nuance of lordship influence that is significant in Ephesians, particularly in the use of "in the Lord" (ἐν κυρίῳ) as a "Pauline formula."[17] In Ephesians, ἐν κυρίῳ is used seven times, comparable to Romans (eight times), 1 Corinthians (nine times), and Philippians (nine times). Including Colossians (four times) and

[17] Walter Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. II. κύριος, 2bγ.

Philemon (two times), it is used twenty-two times in the prison epistles, comprising almost half of the forty-seven times in the NT.[18] As such, the significance of ἐν κυρίῳ in highlighting Jesus Christ's lordship influence, i.e. his authority, over various realms is emphasized.

Table 3.6. Jesus Christ's Titles in Ephesians	
Explicatures	Honorific Aspect
1. Lord Κύριος, Jesus Ἰησοῦς, and Messiah Χριστός used in combinations a. κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:2; 6:23) b. τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:3, 17; 5:20; 6:24) c. ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν (3:11) 2. Lord Κύριος (1:15; 2:21; 4:1, 6, 17; 5:8, 17, 19, 22; 6:1, 4, 7, 8, 10, 21) a. ἐν κυρίῳ (2:21; 4:1, 17; 5:8; 6:1, 10, 21) b. ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ (1:15) 3. Messiah Χριστός (1:1, 3, 5, 10, 12, 17; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 12; 4:7, 12, 13, 15; 5:2, 23, 25) 4. Head Κεφαλή (1:22b; 4:15b; 5:23b) a. αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἥτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ (1:22b–23a) b. ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλή, Χριστός, ἐξ οὗ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα … (4:15b–16a) c. ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος· (5:23b)	Authority
5. Son of God and the Perfect Man: εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον (4:13)	Profile
6. Savior Σωτήρ: ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος· (5:23b)	Roles

[18] These results are tabulated using Logos Bible Software, search parameters "ἐν BEFORE 1 WORD κυρίῳ." If ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ is also considered, the frequency in various books amounts to: Romans (10), First Corinthians (10), Ephesians (9), Philippians (9), Colossians (4), and Philemon (2); and a total of 54 times in the NT.

The six tables above illustrate that there are many explicatures of Jesus Christ in the discourse. They are voluminous and repetitive for each category, within each category (such as for ἐν phrases and κυρίος title), and as a whole altogether. Each category is densely packed within important pericopes, such as the instrumental prepositional phrases in 1:3–14 and 2:11–22, the listing of Christ's positions in 1:20–23, and the listing of Christ's achievements in 2:11–22. They are also used strategically with other categories, for instance the instrumental ἐν and διὰ phrases of Christ with Christ's achievements in 2:11–22, and the single appearances of τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ and ἄνδρα τέλειον with Christ's prerogatives and purposes in 4:8–13. Explicating all of this data facilitates drawing inferences of the three broad aspects that Christ is honored in the discourse.

The next three sections focus on how these large amounts of explicatures overlap and contribute towards manifesting Jesus Christ's benefactions, authority, and honorific roles and profile. They summarize how Ephesians' honorific genre and context enable the audience to recognize these explicatures as triggers and to processing them through *narrowing*, *broadening*, *category extension*, *reference assignment*, *disambiguation*, and *enrichment* to form specific honorific concepts of Christ. These three honorific aspects of Christ below are presented in terms of their ease, i.e. efficiency, in which they would be triggered by the explicatures. In an honorific document, the audience would naturally expect to find a list of the honorand's benefactions, what honor is bestowed as a result, and a characterization of the honorand.[19] As such, the benefactions of Christ comprising of explicatures of his achievements and prerogatives are discussed first. The authority of Christ is presented next, composed from the explicatures of his positions and titles

[19] This has been discussed is the section "Honorific Features in Ephesians" in ch. 2. See Danker, *Benefactor*, 317–486; Winter, "Public Honouring," 87–103.

that are described as honors that God bestowed upon Christ. The third group is Christ's honorific roles and profile, consisting of explicatures that characterize who he is and his relationship to believers and the church. This last group would draw data from various categories including Christ's functions, achievements, purposes, prerogatives and titles.

Benefactions of Jesus Christ

This section comprises mostly explicatures of Christ's achievements and prerogatives. Seven benefactions of Christ are derived from explicatures of his achievements in 2:11–22. They are: 1) suffering/dying on the cross, 2) bringing far-away Gentiles near, 3) destroying the dividing wall, 4) abolishing the Law, 5) reconciling/uniting Gentiles and Jews, 6) reconciling both Gentiles and Jews to God, and 7) killing the enmity. In 4:7, 8c, 11, Christ's prerogative of giving gifts is in itself a benefaction of Christ. Thus, Christ's role as the Great Benefactor is ostensibly manifested through these benefactions.

Julien Smith also notes that Christ is the benefactor in 4:1–16. However, he fails to identify the greater number of explicatures in 2:11–22 that more strongly and vividly portray Christ as benefactor.[20] Due to Smith's limited listing of Christ's benefactions, he does not compare Christ's benefactor role with those of honorific inscriptions and documents, especially the Caesars', and could not claim Christ to be the *Great* Benefactor. Thus, Smith fails to recognize the honorific genre used for the writing of Ephesians and subsequently the honors of the Caesars as ad-hoc concepts. On the other hand, Smith's review of Greco-Roman and Jewish

[20] Smith, *Christ the Ideal King*, 217–21.

sources that serve to attest the benefactor role of Christ in Ephesians supports the argument of this research that Christ is the Great Benefactor.[21]

Suffering/Dying on the Cross (2:13, 14c, 16b, 18)

As mentioned in the earlier sub-section on Christ's functions, Eph 2:11–22 contain one of the highest concentrations of ἐν and διά phrases in the discourse. Phrases such as "without Christ" (χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, 2:12), "in Christ Jesus," "by means of the blood of Christ" (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 2:13), "in his flesh" (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, 2:14c), "in himself" (ἐν αὐτῷ, 2:15c), "by means of the cross," "with him" (διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἐν αὐτῷ, 2:16b), and "through/because of him" (δι' αὐτοῦ, 2:18) consistently assign references to Christ as the subject responsible and agent instrumental for the accomplishments stated in the pericope. Among all the explicatures honoring Christ in 2:11–22, these eight phrases would easily trigger Christ's benefaction for humankind. Five of these phrases ostensibly refer to Christ's suffering and dying on the cross.

In 2:16b, the phrase διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ undoubtedly refers to the cross and to crucifixion, the cruelest and most feared form of execution in the Roman Empire. It was the means by which Christ killed the enmity and brought about reconciliation. The phrases "in the blood of Christ" and "in his flesh" in 2:13–14c (ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ) vividly denote the intense physical suffering that Christ underwent when he was nailed to the cross to bring the Gentiles near, destroy the dividing wall, and abolish the Law. In addition, the phrases "with him"

[21] Smith examines Aristotle (*Pol*. 1286b.9–12), Xenophon (*Cyrus* 8.6.23; 8.2.9; cf. 8.1.44); Isocrates (*Evag*. 45); Diotogenes (Stob. 4.7.62; Thesleff 75.1–11); the *Letter of Aristeas* 281; Philo (*Legat*. 81, 86–87, 118); and Josephus (*Ant*. 8.124) as quoted in ibid., 218–19.

(ἐν αὐτῷ, 2:16b), and "through/because of him" (δι' αὐτοῦ, 2:18) recall the earlier three ἐν and διά phrases that reference to Christ's suffering and dying on the cross and also associate them to his other achievements of 1) reconciling/uniting Gentile and Jewish believers, 2) reconciling humankind to God, and 3) enabling them to have unhindered access to God in the Spirit. As such, Jesus' suffering and death on the cross as explicated by these ἐν and διά phrases are his great benefaction to all humanity.

Among benefactions honored in the first-century AD, suffering under an oppressive leader and martyrdom was praised.[22] Thus, Jesus Christ's suffering and sacrificial death for the purpose of reconciling and making peace between Jewish and Gentile believers are also aretalogical benefactions deserving of honor. Furthermore, his death by crucifixion was very much counter-imperial because the cross as the symbol of power and control of the Caesars over the Roman Empire had become Christ's means of securing peace. Christ's resurrection completely overcame the power of the cross and turned it into a symbol of victory for all believers through which they would hope and trust in Christ.

Bringing far-away Gentiles near (2:13)

The phrases ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ and ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ in 2:13 emphasize Christ Jesus as the agent through whom Gentiles "formerly far away" (οἵ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν) are "brought near" (ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς). Despite scholarly views that "far away" and "near" refer to Jews, Thielman proposes, "the broader context of the passage indicates that a reference to the Gentiles probably at least stands in the background and may be the primary meaning of the

[22] Danker, *Benefactor*, 409; Andrew J. Kelley, "Aretalogy," *LBD* Logos Bible Software.

text."[23] The Gentiles' former state is described in 2:12. They were spiritually empty and politically estranged. Cultically, Gentiles' spiritual condition worsens progressively from being "separated from Christ" the Jewish Messiah (χωρὶς Χριστοῦ), to "having no hope" (ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες), and finally to being "godless in the world" (ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ). Politically, their identity without Christ resulted in them being "alienated from the citizenship of Israel" (ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ) and becoming "strangers of the covenants of promise" (ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας).[24]

However, through the instrumental agency of Christ in 2:13, Gentiles are brought near to the Jews and to God. Their movement progresses from being "without Christ" (χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, 2:12) to "in Christ Jesus" (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, 2:13) and "by means of the blood of Christ" (ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 2:13). Other prepositional phrases such as "in his flesh," "by means of the cross," "in himself," "with him," and "through/because of him" (2:14–18) complement them to emphasize Christ is the critical agent and his sacrifical death on the cross is the only means through which God worked to bring the Gentiles near. The focus on Gentiles being the ones far away but now brought near and reconciled to God by Christ's agency (2:13, 16a) testifies to the "public outreach" of Christ's benefaction. A number of passages in Romans attest to "Paul's most striking discovery … that God could skirt national privilege.… [A]n antithesis of outsiders and insiders based on national or cultural inheritance is illegitimate."[25] As such, drawing

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[23] Thielman, "Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 818. Similarly, Moritz comments, "we must now interpret those far away and those near not exclusively as Jews at home and in the dispersion, but as those who are prepared to worship the God of Israel both outside (*far*) and within (*near*) the covenant people" (*Profound Mystery*, 33).

[24] Lincoln also notes this political meaning (*Ephesians*, 137). Long has argued very succinctly Paul's "political theory and theology" in 2:11–22 ("Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 258–64).

[25] Danker, *Benefactor*, 337. See Rom 1:16; 3:22–23; 5:18; 8:32; 10:4, 12; 11:32.

Gentiles near to God in Ephesians is Christ's public benefaction and portrays him as the sacrificial Great Benefactor to the Gentiles. While scholars mostly agree about the nuances of these prepositional phrases of Christ in Eph 2:12–18, they do not see them as contributing to the honorific concept of Christ's role as benefactor. They lack the discourse's honorific context and genre that could readily reveal the honorific nuance and significance of these phrases.

Destroying the Dividing Wall, Abolishing the Law, and Killing the Enmity (2:14–16)

Three explicit achievements of Christ are discussed together here. "The barrier of/that is the dividing wall" (τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, 2:14c) has been interpreted as the wall in the Jerusalem temple separating the inner court from the outer courtyard.[26] Gentiles were forbidden to trespass this wall or be killed for doing so. An inscription stating this law was put up at the entrance of the temple for everyone to see.[27] This wall distances the Gentiles socially from the Jews. It also limited their nearness to God in cultic practices and estranged them from the political privileges of God's covenant with the Jews. The common interpretive option of a "cosmic wall" is unsatisfactory.[28] In the immediate context of 2:13–16 that stresses bringing the Gentiles near and reconciling/uniting them with the Jews and to God, the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ could indeed best be understood as the physical wall in the temple segregating Gentiles from Jews in worshipping God. It is grammatically in apposition to "the hostility/enmity" (τὴν ἔχθραν) that is also appositive to "the law" (τὸν νόμον, 2:15a). The three

[26] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 141–43; Talbert, *Ephesians*, 79.

[27] Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, 79–81; Talbert, *Ephesians*, 79; Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 471–72.

[28] Best, *Ephesians*, 254–55; Talbert, *Ephesians*, 79.

phrases "destroying the barrier of/that is the dividing wall" (τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας), "the enmity, in his flesh" (τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ), and "abolishing the law of the commandments in ordinances" (τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας) are also tightly abutted and require to be treated together. Lincoln explains well their significance,

> [T]he temple balustrade … would powerfully symbolize the alienation of Gentiles from Israel…. [I]n functioning as a fence to protect Israel from the impurity of the Gentiles, the law became such a sign of Jewish particularism that it also alienated Gentiles and became a cause of hostility.
>
> Christ removed or abolished this hostility. ἔχθρα, … refers to the hostility between Jews and Gentiles that is bound up with the law…. The objective situation of hostility because of the law's exclusiveness engendered personal and social antagonisms. The laws … often led Jews to have a contempt for Gentiles which could regard Gentiles as less than human. In response, Gentiles would often regard Jews with great suspicion, considering them inhospitable and hateful to non-Jews, and indulge in anti-Jewish prejudice…. This lively mutual animosity was one of the uglier elements in the Greco-Roman world.[29]

Indeed, Lincoln assets, "Christ neutralized these negative effects of the law by doing away with the law."[30] The expression τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν refers to the Torah and all its requirements and commandments.[31] It is also highlighted as the crux of the Jew-Gentile separation as the center G (2:15a) in the chiasm of 2:11–22. Long also states,

> Paul speaks of the law in its particulars, i.e. in its initial temporary covenantal intention, its cultic practices that reinforce separation from Gentiles. This purpose of the law is now invalidated by the work of Christ. On the one hand the law is valid as revelation, and remains valid as pointing out sinfulness in humanity; on the other hand, the law, as a religious system of rightly relating to God (i.e. being righteous with God), does not remain in place, but is annulled by the sacrificial work of Christ, who simultaneously brings ethnic and theological reconciliation.[32]

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[29] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 141–42.

[30] Ibid., 142.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 288, n.118.

Thus, the symbolic relationships between the three terms/phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, τὴν ἔχθραν, and τὸν νόμον in 2:14c–15a and their resulting detrimental effects on the socio-political-religious situation of the Gentiles are clarified.[33]

Furthermore, τὴν ἔχθραν is also found in the phrase "by means of the cross killing the enmity with him" (διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ, 2:16b) that adds an important dimension to how the destruction and abolishment is accomplished: through Christ's crucifixion. In 2:16b, the references of the phrase 1) to crucifixion should be sufficiently clear through the use of σταυρός as a cognate of σταυρόω, and 2) to Christ through αὐτός that is consistent with the other uses of αὐτός to refer to Christ in 2:14 (2x), 15, 18.[34] I judge that the phrase διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ modifies ἀποκτείνω instead of ἀποκαταλλάσσω because of its closer proximity and more complementary nuance to ἀποκτείνω. The phrase emphasizes the means of how "killing the enmity" (ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν) was done in order to ultimately achieve reconciliation to God. In addition, although αὐτός could refer to the cross, I concur with Lincoln that the author's consistent use of it in the immediate context of the pericope to refer to Christ should take priority.[35] As a result, the translation of 2:16 is essentially unchanged: "and in order that he might reconcile the two in one body to God killing the enmity by means of the cross with him." More significantly, Christ's achievements as the mediator and the means of reconciliation to/with God are more clearly illuminated and efficiently processed as honorific benefactions.

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[33] Again, Smith does not and could not do more than to suggest, "the author of Ephesians may be thinking in socio-political terms" (*Christ the Ideal King*, 215).

[34] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 146.

[35] Ibid.; cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 384.

Christ's achievements of destroying the dividing wall, abolishing the Law, and killing the enmity are significant and essentially honorific. Christ has nullified the disparaging effects of the law separating Gentiles from Jews and eliminated the enmity between humankind and God. Christ himself is the mediator (grammatically in 2:14–16 and historically) who has accomplished these liberating acts. He offers himself as the means by his sacrificial death on the cross (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἐν αὐτῷ) to ensure their completion. The emphatic effects of the ἐν and διά phrases again demonstrate his personal agency in his own accomplishments. According to the first-century honorific convention, Paul's audiences would be familiar with such acts of liberation and self-sacrifices and associate them as deeds of benefactors.[36] In the honorific context of Ephesians, these achievements of Christ are therefore benefactions that portray him as the Great Benefactor to Gentiles and Jews alike.

Reconciling/Uniting Gentile and Jewish believers and Reconciling humankind to God (2:14–16)

This final pair of Christ's benefactions is derived from the three explicit explicatures and also a result of the previous five benefactions. The phrases "the one who made both one" (ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἕν, 2:14b), "in order that he might found the two in himself into one new humanity" (ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, 2:15b), and "he might reconcile both in one body to God" (ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ, 2:16a) emphasize Christ's purposes are on one hand to reconcile and unite both Gentiles and Jews into one new people, thus founding a new humanity, and on the other hand to reconcile them to God.

[36] Danker, *Benefactor*, 397–98.

The uses of words depicting quantity in these three phrases produce vivid effects for the audience. Εἷς connotes singularity as well as exclusivity. Here in 2:14–16, it is also used to produce efficacious effects regarding the results of Christ's achievements. First, as the "complement in an object-complement double accusative construction" with ἀμφότεροι in relation to ποιέω in 2:14b,[37] it stresses the oneness and exclusiveness of the product Christ has made. Functioning as the adjectives of ἄνθρωπος and σῶμα in 2:15–16, it emphasizes respectively that the humanity founded by Christ is unique from other political entities established by other founders, and that the body he reconciled to God is united, contrary to their former social, political, and religious segregations. The uses of εἷς before ἄνθρωπος and σῶμα thus implicate that the church is the new humanity and the body that Christ has founded and reject any other human who might claim to have established such a body or any other group that might be that body reconciled to God.

Second, it is used in contrast to ἀμφότεροι in 2:14b, 16a and δύο in 2:15b, both of which identify the Gentiles and the Jews as the peoples transformed by Christ's benefactions. While ἀμφότεροι is usually translated as "both," it also connotes the idea of "totality of two."[38] In this way, the entirety of all ethnicities is expressed including Jews and non-Jews, i.e. Gentiles represented by the noun ἔθνος. The name-calling between the two peoples based on the practice of circumcision in obedience to the Law (2:11) would only worsen their separation and had to

[37] Larkin, *Ephesians*, 40. See also Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 368.

[38] Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), s.v. ἀμφότεροι, 59.25. Lincoln explains well the use of the neuter in 2:14 to denote "entities" such that "the realm of the Jews and the realm of the Gentiles" are in view, in contrast to the use of the masculine plural in 2:16 (*Ephesians*, 140).

cease. Thus, the reconciliation of Gentiles and Jews and the unifying of believers from all ethnicities are accomplished in Christ by his death on the cross. Resolution of conflict is certainly a hallmark of benefactors. Danker discusses how Jesus is exemplified in Luke as a benefactor who resolves conflict between people even though he was wrongly accused and sentenced.[39] As such, Christ's achievement of reconciling and uniting Gentiles and Jews would surely be a great benefaction and he would rightly be honored as the Great Benefactor.

Furthermore, 2:16a emphasizes that Christ's benefaction of reconciliation humankind to God is also achieved. The dative arthrous τῷ θεῷ being the indirect object of ἀποκαταλλάσσω indicates that God is the final recipient of the reconciling action accomplished by Christ. Although Paul's address in 2:11–22 is directed to the Gentiles and focuses on their unfavorable condition and spiritual distance from God, Jews are also implicitly reprimanded for the self-righteous names they used on the Gentiles and on themselves (2:11).[40] Such name-callings reflect their self-perceived superiority over Gentiles and could have contributed to the separation between them. In addition, their privileged position of being God's covenantal people does not exclude them from being part of those who "lived formerly in the lusts of our flesh doing the will of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature children of wrath" (ἀνεστράφημέν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν, καὶ ἤμεθα τέκνα

[39] Danker, *Benefactor*, 421–23.

[40] Lincoln states, "Gentiles are called by the name 'the uncircumcision,' which for a Jew often announced the inferiority or even shame of those so branded. … [T]he formulation 'what is called the circumcision' does serve to put some distance between the writer and this sort of distinction, suggesting that he is using it to make a point rather than because it was natural to his own outlook. A more negative evaluation of the title 'the circumcision' is … to be found in the term χειροποίητος, 'made by hands.' … To talk of circumcision in the flesh made by hands is therefore to reflect the Pauline view that this is no longer the real circumcision (cf. Rom 2:28, 29; Phil 3:2, 3; Col 2:11)" (*Ephesians*, 135–36).

φύσει ὀργῆς, 2:3). Jews, like Gentiles, were also separated from God because of the Law as Paul's teaching in other places exemplify.[41] As such in 2:16a, they are not exempted from their need for reconciliation to God.

Paul's use of the verb ἀποκαταλλάσσω triggers the formation of Christ's achievements of reconciliation between Gentiles and Jews and between humankind to God as honorific benefactions. Danker states, "The crucial term ἀποκατάστασις would be readily grasped by Graeco-Roman auditors as a reference either to Jesus or to God or to both as benefactors."[42] Although ἀποκαταλλάσσω emphasizes reconciliation of human-human and human-divine relationships while ἀποκατάστασις means restoration in a general sense, both words bear the similar nuance of restoring or healing something that has been severed or broken to its original or intended good state.[43]

Thus, Christ tore down the dividing wall, abolished the Law, destroyed the enmity, and reconciled both Gentiles and Jews to each other and to God. These two peoples are reconciled into one body, becoming fellow-citizens and no longer as strangers and aliens (2:19). They are also reconciled to God in that one body, gaining access to the Father because of Christ, becoming God's household, a holy temple and a dwelling of God (2:18–22). Christ's agency of being the sacrifice needed for reconciliation and his personal act of mediating the reconciliation between both Gentiles and Jews to God in 2:13–18 are his benefactions and portray him as the Great Benefactor.

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[41] Lincoln helpfully lists Gal 3:10–22; 2 Cor 3:7–11; Rom 3:19, 20; 7:7–25; 9:30–10:4 (ibid., 146).

[42] Danker, *Benefactor*, 423.

[43] L&N, s.v. ἀποκαταλλάσσω, 40.1; ἀποκατάστασις, 13.65.

Giving Ministers as Gifts (4:7, 8c, 11)

The context of 4:1–16 is the preservation of unity and building up of the body of Christ through the gifts that Christ distributes to the church. Paul states in 4:7, "And/But grace was given to every one of us according to the measure/proportion of Christ's gift" (Ἑνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ). This is made explicit in 4:8c, where Paul adapts and changes the phrase "you received gifts from humanity" in Ps 67:19b LXX (ἔλαβες δόματα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ) to "he gave gifts to humans" (*ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*).[44] There are some who suggest that the background for the use of Ps 68:18 in Eph 4:8 could be the Pentecost, the tradition regarding Moses' ascent to receive the Torah,[45] or Christ's superiority over evil spiritual powers.[46] However, this research proposes that the honorific context in/of the discourse would have triggered concepts of honor of Christ in 4:8 consistent with Paul's development of the motif of honor/dishonor and portrayal of Christ as the Great Benefactor in Ephesians. Thus, in 4:8c, Paul honors Christ by highlighting Christ's benefaction of giving gifts

[44] The source of Paul's quotation of Psalm 68:18 in Eph 4:8 has been traced to either the Targum Psalms, ancient rabbinic traditions, or the Hebrew MT and LXX (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 242–43; Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 56–76; Harris, *Descent of Christ*, 64–104). This research agrees with Moritz and Thielman who favor the MT/LXX (Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 58–60; Thielman, "Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 821–23).

[45] Lincoln concludes, "Pentecost lies in the background of the citation's use here" (*Ephesians*, 244). Harris' particular interest on the descent of Christ motif concludes: "while … ascent-traditions concerning Moses are not explicitly connected with the psalm, they appear to have been in general circulation and were probably fairly widespread. This suggests that such traditions of an ascent to heaven by Moses at Mt. Sinai when he received the Torah would have been known to the author of Ephesians, and in his interpretation of Ps 68:19 with reference to Christ's victorious ascent he built upon such Moses-traditions to suit his own purposes in the epistle" (*Descent of Christ*, 142). Moritz rejects Harris' proposal and concludes, "a likely *Sitz im Leben* … is the theological difference between the Christian and Jewish Pentecost. Ps 68 played a major part in the latter" (*Profound Mystery*, 84–85).

[46] Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic*, 56–58; Thielman, "Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 823–24.

to the church.[47] Then in 4:11, these gifts are listed in terms of five ministerial roles in the church, namely apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers.

First, civil benefactors in the first century were commonly praised and honored for giving gifts and meeting the needs of beneficiaries. Benefactors were known to give monetary donations or build roads, water aqueducts, religious buildings like temples and shrines and public structures like baths and theatres as gifts to the public.[48] Thus, Paul's repeated explicatures of Christ's giving (ἔδωκεν, 4:8c; αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν, 4:11) places Christ in the likes of civil benefactors.

Second, the list of gifts in 4:11 is unique from other lists of spiritual gifts in Rom 12:4–8 and 1 Cor 12 in that it emphasizes 1) the giving of ministers not just the spiritual gifts per se, and 2) the purpose of these ministers for the church as a whole instead of the exercising and interactions of specific gifts with others. In Eph 4:7, 8c, the concept of "gift" (δωρεά and δόμα) is narrowed from the broad sense of money and physical structures contributed by civil benefactors to refer to ministers: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers (4:11) with abilities and responsibilities to testify, prophesy, evangelize, and teach the word. These ministerial roles emphasize the primacy and prominence of the ministry of the Scripture/word in the early church. Paul's use of "gift" as a metaphor to categorize the five ministerial roles in Eph 4:7, 8c, 11 indicates that the church does not have the ability to produce them or repay Christ except to exercise them wisely and faithfully according to their intended purpose.

[47] In 4:8a–8b, Paul highlights Christ's authority over all forms of powers and honorific role as triumphant victor. These will be discussed in the sections on "Authority of Jesus Christ" and "Honorific Roles and Profile of Jesus Christ."

[48] Danker, *Benefactor*, 408–9; Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence*, 23–36, 71–112.

The gift concept is also disambiguated from civil benefactors' gifts in their purposes and causes. Civil benefactors' gifts comprised of many public buildings including mainly imperial cult temples that bolstered the power of the Caesars and many baths and gymnasiums that catered to public demands. However, Christ gives the five types of ministers as gifts for the growth and fruitfulness of the church. Although the broad scope of influence of Christ's gifts is in tandem with the public nature of civil benefactions,[49] Paul emphasizes that God's purposes for the five ministerial roles are to equip the saints and build up of the body (4:12). The abutted prepositional phrases in 4:12 express the immediate purposes of Christ's gifts: "for (the purpose of) the equipping of the saints for/to do works of service" (πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας) and "for/to build up the body of Christ" (εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ). Four more prepositional phrases in 4:13 further indicate the ultimate goal: "until all of us attain to the unity of the faithfulness and the knowledge of the Son of God, the perfect man, to the measure of the fullness of Christ" (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ). Thus, these ministers are foundational for the good and growth of the body (2:20; 4:15–16).[50] They are essential to combat false teachings and deceitful schemes that might propagate within the church as she grows (4:14–16). In 1 Cor 12:28, Paul lists apostles, prophets, and teachers as the first three ministers/functions God has appointed for the church although the list there could also be about an ordering of church ministries or spiritual gifts.[51] Thus, Christ's

[49] Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence*, 71–112. See also p. 67–68 of this work on the public nature of civil benefactions.

[50] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 249–53.

[51] This research does not discuss these options and the intricacies between them.

giving of ministers as gifts is conceivably a benefaction to the church that also portrays him as the Great Benefactor.

Authority of Jesus Christ

The authority of Jesus Christ in Ephesians consists of explicatures of Christ's positions found in the pericopes 1:20–23; 4:8a, 9–10, 15; 5:23, and title of κυρίος throughout the discourse. Based on Christ's benefactions presented in the earlier section, he is worthy to receive the honors that God bestowed upon him.

Authority over All (1:20–23; 4:8a, 9–10) and Headship (1:22b; 4:15b; 5:23b)

The authority of Jesus Christ is powerfully portrayed through explicatures of Christ's position first in 1:20–23 and then in 4:8a, 9–10. In the former pericope, the working of God's mighty strength elevates Christ to a supreme position and is enriched by descriptions in four different aspects. These are densely packed in abutted construction in three verses. First, in 1:20a, God raised Christ from out of the dead. This explicit reference to Christ's resurrection establishes Christ's position after and over death. While the Caesars could never overcome death but were apotheosized upon their demise, Christ has conquered and presently rules over death. Second, in 1:20b, Christ is seated on the right of God, the supreme position of rule and authority. One of the rewards for benefactors is a privilege seat of honor at games and theatres.[52] Paul's audiences would have easily associated Christ's seat of power with benefactors' privilege and honorable seats of the first-century. However, the concept of Christ's seat is disambiguated from those of benefactors at games since it is of a greater and more superior degree.

[52] Danker, *Benefactor*, 468.

Third, 1:21 elaborates that Christ's supreme position is "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name being named, not only in this age but also in the coming one." This position is clearly in relation to all authority, whether in form, level or nature. The list of ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος increases in its scope of influence and degree of intensity.[53] Shortly following the list, the audience will understand that all these forms of authority are contending against Christ in order to work in humankind to walk according to the age of this world (2:2). However, Christ's position far above his enemies establishes his authority over them. The concept of Christ's position and authority broadens in scope by the emphatic uses of πᾶς before the list and the phrase ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου in 1:21. Since Christ is seated with God, all things are therefore subjected under his feet (1:22a). Paul's substantival uses of πᾶς in 1:22 again leave nothing excluded. This inclusive scope would of course include all human rulers as well.

The phrase "ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας" in the list of power entities in v.21 needs to be discussed here. Against the common assumption that the entities in the list are "too often completely spiritualized," Long argues that more often than not, human rulers are in view in the use of ἀρχή and ἐξουσία in the Pauline letters and the NT.[54] Long demonstrates that ἀρχή and ἐξουσία, including the use of ἀρχών in 2:2, are "well-known terms of earthly political import, being part of equivalent Greek expressions of Latin ones referring to Roman Imperial power, governing

[53] This is similar to the lists in Eph 4:31 and 6:12.

[54] Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 124–29.

officials, and political positions."[55] Walter Wink also concludes "*archõn* is used exclusively for an incumbent-in-office and … for human agents."[56]

Barth recognizes (1) that "terms used to describe the powers in Eph 1:21 frequently denote political rulers in legal, financial, and philosophical literature" and military power, and (2) that when Paul "mentions the *heavenly* dwelling place of the powers and calls them spiritual hosts, he may have thought specifically of their earthly representatives." However, he does not pursue this line of thought and decides that their connections to "the OT, to Jewish intertestamental apocalypticism and later rabbinical teaching" are "most likely."[57] Arnold also thinks that they mirror "a Jewish view of the spirit world" and highlights their connection with the Hellenistic world by citing usages of their plural forms in extra-canonical Judaism sources.[58] However, it is doubtful whether the audiences of Ephesians, mainly Gentiles, could get access to or gain maximum cognitive effects from the OT/Jewish references, since these materials would require a substantial amount of knowledge of Jewish religion, groups, and thoughts. I judge that the evidences Long presented are (1) more exact in form (being all singular ἀρχή), (2) greater in number since such titulature are found in inscriptions and literature of the Roman imperial period, and (3) more widely propagated and therefore more accessible to the Ephesians audiences. Roman human rulers being constantly in the Gentiles' cognitive environment would more readily come to their minds. It could also be possible that the phrase ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις at

[55] Ibid., 125–27.

[56] Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 13.

[57] Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 172.

[58] Arnold, *Ephesians, Power and Magic*, 52–53. A response to Arnold's proposal of a spiritual powers setting for Ephesians is given in ch. 5.

the beginning of the list would have prompted one to think that these entities are spiritual. However, since syntactically it modifies the verb καθίσας, it more readily and necessarily situates where Christ is seated spatially than dictates where these entities are located.[59] Moreover, the inclusivity of πᾶς inflicts a totalizing effect upon ἀρχή and ἐξουσία such that they are (1) of human origin that do not "refer only to heavenly entities,"[60] and (2) would consist of *all* human rulers, including the Caesars.

Fourth, "head" (κεφαλή) is used strategically to emphasize Christ's headship always in relation to his body σῶμα, the church ἐκκλησία. (1) In 1:22b–23a, Christ's headship derived from his supreme position of authority in 1:20–23 is established over all things given to the church, which is his body.[61] (2) In 4:15b, Christ's headship functions as "rule and origin … Christ is in the position and has the power to supply his Church with the leadership, the life, and the love that are the requisites for its growth."[62] (3) Christ's headship is the source and/or ruler to the church, and also relates to his role and title as Savior σωτήρ in 5:23.[63] In each case, the reference of κεφαλή is always assigned to Χριστός. In 1:22, αὐτὸν and κεφαλὴν are in a double accusative construction to ἔδωκεν. They are in apposition to each other. Since the antecedent of αὐτός is assigned to Χριστός in 1:20a, the same grammatical relationship applies to κεφαλή. In 4:15b and 5:23b, κεφαλή is the predicate nominative and is abutted next to Χριστός. While ὅς ἐστιν in 4:15b

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[59] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 20–21; Best, *Ephesians*, 115–19.

[60] Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 124.

[61] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 67–68.

[62] Ibid., 262, 370.

[63] Currently debates continue whether κεφαλή means source or ruler in 5:23b (ibid., 368–70).

makes it clear that ἡ κεφαλή is in apposition to Χριστός, the construction in 5:23b requires ἐστιν to be implied and that ὁ Χριστὸς functions as the subject and is equated to κεφαλή. More significantly, κεφαλή is always used in connection with the body of Christ (τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ, 1:22b; πᾶν τὸ σῶμα, 4:16a; σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος, 5:23b) that is referenced to the church (τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἥτις ἐστὶν, 1:22b–23a; ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος, 5:23b). In 1:23a, the references of αὐτός and ὅς are assigned to Χριστός and ἐκκλησία respectively. In 5:23b, the grammatical construction of αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος is similar to ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας such that the items in each part of speech between the two constructions parallel one another:

Nominative subject	Implied verb	Predicate nominative	Genitive noun
ὁ Χριστὸς	(ἐστιν)	κεφαλὴ	τῆς ἐκκλησίας
αὐτὸς	(ἐστιν)	σωτὴρ	τοῦ σώματος

Illustration 3.2 below (p. 138) shows that the phrase αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος is emphasized as the center of the chiastic structure of 5:23–24, further focusing on the "body" and its reference to the church. This consistent reference of σῶμα to ἐκκλησία in 1:23a and 5:23b should guide readers to apply the same mental reference for τὸ σῶμα in 4:16a. Explicating the grammatical relationships between κεφαλή, Χριστός, σῶμα, and ἐκκλησία enables one to conceptualize the categorical extension of κεφαλή from being the control center of a human being's physical body to that of Christ's body, the church. Paul repeatedly highlights Christ's headship to the church to emphasize Christ's authority over her. In other words, Christ's headship as bestowed by God

triggers the honorific concept of his authority to the church and far above all else and under which all things are subjected.

Thus, Christ is elevated to the supreme position of authority on God's right. This authority is manifested in four ways: conquered death, seated with God, raised far above all other authorities and subordinating all things, and given as head to the Church. Christ's complete and self-sacrificial benefactions in securing peace and reconciliation between Jew and Gentile deserve this honor. The placement of 1:20–23 is strategic. It emphasizes that Christ's supreme position of authority is a demonstration of God's working in and through him as God's human viceroy (1:3–14; 2:4–7) and an honorific award for his benefactions (2:11–22). Placed before 2:1–3, the affirmations of 1:20–23 provide an essential framework to reject, shame, and dishonor the ruler of the authority of the air (2:2).

Last but not the least, explicatures in 4:8–10 also trigger Christ's position and authority over all things. Christ has ascended on high far above all the heavens. Proposals about the background of Paul's use of Ps 68:18 in Eph 4:8 have been mentioned in the previous section on p. 126. Despite varying discussions that Paul might be referring to Moses' ascension to receive the Torah in some ancient rabbinic tradition or to the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost after Christ's ascension to heaven in his *midrash pesher* interpretation of 4:8,[64] this work judges that the honorific context of the discourse has immediate relevance for the explicit use of ἀναβαίνω. The verb is used three times to emphasize that Christ is at a high place and raised to a position of authority and power. The use of Ps 67:19a LXX is not a direct quotation: "you ascended" (ἀνέβης) has been changed to "having ascended" (*ἀναβάς*) in Eph 4:8a. The phrase διὸ λέγει at

[64] Ibid., 242–44; Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 56–76; Harris, *Descent of Christ*, 64–104; Thielman, "Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 819–25.

the beginning of the verse serves to make the audience aware that what follows is material of scriptural standard.[65] Regardless of what Paul's source text could be, Thielman emphasizes well, "it seems best to think that Paul himself changed the Greek rendering of the text to suit his argument at this point in the letter."[66] The changing of the three second-person verbs and the phrase ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ in Ps 67:19 LXX to a participle, two third-person verbs, and *τοῖς ἀνθρώποις* respectively in Eph 4:8 demonstrates that Paul believed he had the liberty to make these changes but more significantly that he was compelled to because it would better communicate his message. His *midrash pesher* in 4:9–10 of the change he made to ἀναβαίνω also supports this position.

Moreover, in contrast to the LXX, the participial form *ἀναβὰς* of ἀναβαίνω establishes a temporal condition for the following verb αἰχμαλωτεύω such that the emphasis rests on the completion of the participle's action as the criteria that effect the other action.[67] As such, Christ's ascension on high is the highlighted event that initiates his leading captive a host of captives and giving gifts to human beings. Following this emphasis, 4:9–10 explains Christ's ascension first with a reference to his descent "to the lower part of the earth" (εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς, 4:9b) that might seem redundant initially but quickly becomes necessary to further emphasize his ascent, i.e. "far above all the heavens" (ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, 4:10b). To end on a high

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[65] Thielman, "Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 822.

[66] Ibid., 823.

[67] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 624–25; see also Larkin, *Ephesians*, 75. Having said this, the main verb αἰχμαλωτεύω still bears most of the weight of Eph 4:8b and connects our verse with the theme of Ps 68:18 (see sub-section "Triumphant Victor" on p. 157). The textual variant *καὶ ἔδωκεν* is judged to be not original. See also Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on The Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2002), 536.

note, 4:10c provides the grand purpose of Christ's ascension: "in order that he might fulfill all things" (ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα).[68] This purpose clause recalls the infinitival phrase "to sum up all things in Christ" (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ) in 1:10. As such, Christ's descent is not the key focus as its function is to help the audience visualize Christ's movement from where he came from (4:9) to where he is honored and has returned to (4:10). Thus, Christ's ascension is the emphasis of 4:8a, 9–10 based on this grammatical analysis.

As mentioned earlier, scholars have explored and proposed many explanations to the ascent and descent motif, supposing the movement could be related to some ancient tradition.[69] However, it is more straightforward to situate the emphasis on and the purpose of Christ's ascension (provided by the grammatical analysis and the purpose clause) in the context of the honor/dishonor motif in the discourse. Paul has been explicitly honoring Christ in chs. 1–3 of the discourse. Moreover, Christ's high position of authority is already emphasized in 1:20–23 as a great honor bestowed by God. With the background information of 1:20–23, 4:8–10 repeats the emphasis on Christ's exalted and ascended position because of his benefactions for the church (2:11–22) and locates it with reference to the divine realm "far above all the heavens." Thus, both 1:20–23 and 4:8–10 emphasize Christ's ascended position and supreme authority as honors bestowed from God. Christ's headship also triggers his authority over the church because of his great benefactions accomplished for them.

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[68] Moritz states, "Christ ascended to provide the gifts necessary for the church 'to attain… the stature of the fullness of Christ' (v13), a theme reiterated in vv12, 13 and 15f" (*Profound Mystery*, 82).

[69] Moritz explores parallels between Qumran and Rabbinic traditions that apply the psalm to Moses' ascent to heaven to receive the Torah. However, he does not think it fits the ascent and descent motif of 4:8–10 (ibid., 60–63, 81–82).

Lordship

As introduced earlier and in Table 3.6, Christ's title of κυρίος establishes his lordship and authority particularly through the Pauline formula ἐν κυρίῳ used seven times in Ephesians. Albrecht Oepke found ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ and ἐν κυρίῳ "largely peculiar to Paul."[70] BDAG proposes that interpreters recognize "the controlling influence" of κυρίος over the head noun of ἐν κυρίῳ in each instance it is used.[71] As such, the lordship and authority of Christ are strong interpretive nuances in the places where ἐν κυρίῳ appears in Ephesians. Hans Bietenhard comments, "Paul and his churches stand in the presence and under the power of the *kyrios*."[72] In addition, Paul's uses of κυριότητος (1:21) and κοσμοκράτορας (6:12) establish the lordship of evil powers and world rulers in Ephesians that juxtaposes Christ's position of authority he is honoring.[73] Thus, this work proposes that Christ's lordship and authority are proclaimed over six aspects: 1) sacred spaces of worship (ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ; 2:21); 2) Paul's resultant political status (ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ; 4:1) and testimony (μαρτύρομαι ἐν κυρίῳ; 4:17); 3) the cosmos (φῶς ἐν κυρίῳ; 5:8); 4) Christian households (5:22; 6:1, 4, 7–8); 5) Christian battles (ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίῳ; 6:10); and 6) Tychicus' faithful ministry (πιστὸς διάκονος ἐν κυρίῳ; 6:21). Christ's lordship over these realms and people challenges the Caesars' claims of lordship in their imperial temples

[70] Albrecht Oepke, "ἐν," *TDNT* 2:537–43. He proposes five different uses: "membership of Christ and the Church," "an activity or state as Christian," "value judgments circumscribing the sphere of reference," "the objective basis of fellowship with God," and "comprehensively … the gathering of the many into one." The last option Oepke noted the "reference back to eternal election, Eph 1:4, 9; 3:11 … is peculiar to Eph."

[71] BDAG, s.v. ἐν, 4c.

[72] Hans Bietenhard, "κύριος," *NIDNTT* 2:510–19.

[73] Ibid., 514; Foerster Werner and Gottfried Quell, "κύριος, κυρία, κτλ," *TDNT* 3:1039–98.

and shrines, and political office and role, in the world, the Roman households, and the Roman army (to be discussed in ch. 4 and 5).

This same sense of Christ's authority and lordship is already emphasized multiple times in Paul's compact repetition of Jesus' Lordship and Messianic titles (κυρίος and Ἰησοῦς Χριστός in 1:2, 3, 17; 3:11; 5:20; 6:23, 24) and repeated affirmation that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all believers (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1:3, 17; 3:11; 5:20; 6:24). The phrase ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ in 5:22 and 6:7 complements the use of ἐν κυρίῳ in 6:1 to stress Christ's lordship as the basis on which mutual subjection and service of goodwill are commanded in the household code.[74] Last but not the least, the phrase εἷς κύριος (4:5) is an exclusive proclamation of Jesus Christ's lordship in the highly prominent list of "ones" in the creed of 4:4–6 that is made even more emphatic by being placed as the center of a chiasm structuring these verses.[75]

Illustration 3.2. Chiastic Structure of Ephesians 4:4–6

4 Ἓν σῶμα
καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα,
καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν·
5 **εἷς κύριος,** [CENTER of the seven "ones"]
μία πίστις,
ἓν βάπτισμα,
6 εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων,
ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων
καὶ
διὰ πάντων
καὶ
ἐν πᾶσιν.

[74] Including ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ **κυρίου** (6:4), τοῦτο κομίσεται παρὰ **κυρίου** (6:8), and αὐτῶν καὶ ὑμῶν **ὁ κύριός** ἐστιν ἐν οὐρανοῖς (6:9), κυρίος appears five times in the household code.

[75] Long observes this chiastic structure with quantitative emphasis (*Koine Greek Grammar*, 222):

Fantin uses only εἷς κύριος (Eph 4:5) to discuss Paul's use of κύριος as a polemic against Caesar. This is insufficient in view of so many usages of κύριος in the discourse. Moreover his conclusion that "any anti-imperial polemical pragmatic effect in this passage is likely weak" fails to take into consideration the emphatic constructions in and of Eph 4:4–6 and the overall emphasis of Christ's lordship by Paul's use of κύριος in the whole discourse.[76] Paul's uses of κύριος in Ephesians is an intentional motion to emphasize Jesus Christ as the one Lord, to the exclusion of all others, and to exalt and extend Christ's lordship and authority over the specific realms and groups that the Caesars were known to lord over.

Honorific Roles and Profile of Jesus Christ

The third group of honorific aspect is Christ's honorific roles and profile. This group consists of explicatures that characterize Christ and his relationship to believers and the church. The honorific roles of Jesus Christ in Ephesians include 1) God's human viceroy and agent, 2) people founder, 3) Peace and peacemaker, 4) priest, 5) triumphant victor, and 6) savior. The honorific profile of Christ are 1) self-sacrificial and exemplary, and 2) Son of God and Perfect Man. The data contributing to these roles and profile are taken from various categories including Christ's functions, achievements, purposes, prerogatives and titles.

God's Human Viceroy and Agent (1:3–14; 2:4–10; 3:2–13)

This honorific role of Jesus Christ is made explicit by Paul's repeated usages of ἐν and διὰ phrases with Christ as the object of the preposition. Eph 1:3 initiates the blessing (εὐλογητός)

[76] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 233.

of God the Father, the one who blesses (ὁ εὐλογήσας) everyone with all spiritual blessing (ἐν πάσῃ εὐλογίᾳ πνευματικῇ), as the Supreme and Chief Benefactor. The three honorific words identify God as the Honorand. Since the rest of 1:3–14 elaborates what this blessing comprises, ἐν Χριστῷ functions to pinpoint *how* and *through whom* God's blessings are bestowed to humankind.[77] Inscriptions honoring deities would usually identify the agent through whom the deities' benefactions were accomplished rather than the beneficiaries' favorable position to receive the benefactions. The repeated uses of ἐν and διά phrases consistently narrow the focus of the verbs they modify and assign the references of their grammatical objects on Jesus Christ the Messiah, the agent and the human viceroy and instrument chosen by God the Father.

In 1:3–4, "in Christ" (ἐν Χριστῷ) and "in him" (ἐν αὐτῷ) tightly intercalates "he chose" (ἐξελέξατο) emphasizing Christ's function as the agent in relation to God's benefaction of choosing believers. 1n 1:5–7, "in the beloved" (ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ) is in a final position modifying "he bestowed/benefitted" (ἐχαρίτωσεν), and is immediately abutted to "in him" (ἐν ᾧ) that is modifying "we have" (ἔχομεν). In this way, Christ's function in relation to the grace God bestowed on believers and the redemption they received is amplified. Furthermore, the occurrences of "through Jesus Christ" (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:5) and "through his blood" (διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, 1:7) emphasize Christ's instrumental role in God's adoption of his people and their redemption. "In him" (ἐν αὐτῷ, 1:9) and "in Christ" (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, 1:10) are placed in final positions to "he purposed" (προέθετο, 1:9) and "to sum up" (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, 1:10)

[77] Smith similarly states, "Ephesians presents the Christ as a benefactor. … God's blessings for the church are mediated through the Christ. This mediatory function is signaled prominently in the opening *berakah*" (*Christ the Ideal King*, 217).

respectively, again highlighting Christ's agency function to sum up everything according to God's purposes. Finally, two abutted pairs of phrases, "in him in whom" (ἐν αὐτῷ ἐν ᾧ, 1:10–11) and "in Christ in whom" (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ ἐν ᾧ, 1:12–13), each with ἐν ᾧ modifying their respective main verbs "we have received an inheritance" (ἐκληρώθημεν, 1:11) and "we were being sealed" (ἐσφραγίσθητε, 1:13) mark Christ's role in enabling believers to receive God's inheritance and being sealed with the Holy Spirit. Thus, these ἐν and διά phrases repeatedly and densely portray Christ's agency function in 1:3–14.

The locative nuance of ἐν Χριστῷ would suggest that believers' incorporation with Christ becomes the basis upon which they receive God's blessings. However, this nuance is derivable only after Christ is established as the God-appointed agent. Christ needs to be present as the means first before Christians can become incorporated in him to receive God's blessings. Ἐν Χριστῷ as an expression of Christ's agency explains *how* God's blessings come to us. Long also states the "agency of Christ … is the glue to the whole discourse," in particular that ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ recalls Christ's God-appointed messianic position as his Beloved One, evoking "Moses' blessing in Deuteronomy 33, where Israel's title in the LXX is 'the beloved One.'"[78] This interpretation of Christ's agency is consistent with honorific convention and is also the predominant nuance for ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ (1:6), ἐν αὐτῷ (1:4, 9), διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:5), διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ (1:7), and ἐν ᾧ (1:7, 11) within the pericope 1:3–14.[79]

[78] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 280–81.

[79] Talbert also identifies the instrumentality of these phrases though his reading of ἐν Χριστῷ in 1:3 as "Christian" lacks clarity and/or support *Ephesians*, 44–48.

Similarly, Jesus Christ is God's viceroy through whom God's great love and mercy are demonstrated to believers in 2:4–7. Christ is his agent in whom believers are made alive (συνεζωοποίησεν, 2:5) and shown God's surpassing grace (τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, 2:7), and with whom they are raised and seated (συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν, 2:6). Believers' former deadness in sins and trespasses (2:1–3) would never qualify them to receive such great honors and benefactions from God except through Christ who by his own achievements (2:11–22) became Peace (2:14), founded a new humanity (2:15), and made it possible for Gentiles to be incorporated into God's household (2:19–22). Christ's agency established in 1:3–14 and his great exaltation by God in 1:20–23 would also be quickly recalled as the nuance of ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in 2:6, 7.[80]

Furthermore, the phrase ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν in 3:11 identifies "our Lord Jesus Christ" as the agent in whom God's eternal purposes are performed.[81] The locative sense of ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in 3:6 fits the context of 3:2–7 and does not contradict its instrumental usage in 3:11. The context of 3:2–7 is Gentiles' becoming συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα καὶ συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας in their union with Christ according to God's grace because of Paul's ministry as their endangered benefactor. In 3:8–13, God's eternal purpose for the church is carried out through the personal agency and benefactions of Christ (3:11). In 3:12, the phrase διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ "indicates the means by which believers appropriate the new situation for

[80] Cf. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 101–2, 105-09. Believers' participation with Christ is expressed by συν prefixes in the three verbs in 2:5–6 and τῷ Χριστῷ in 2:5. Ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in 2:6, 7 is a more explicit expression than τῷ Χριστῷ and judged to reflect the instrumental nuance consistent with and in continuation to 1:3–14.

[81] Ibid., 189.

themselves."[82] Based on 1) πιστίς being an exemplary virtue of fidelity and reliability of benefactors to be honored, and 2) the prevailing honorific sense in Eph 1–3, reading the διὰ phrase as "through Christ's faithfulness" (subjective genitive) is preferred over "by faith in Christ" (objective genitive).[83] Thus in 3:2–13, Christ's faithfulness is reiterated, strategically recalling again Christ's indispensible role and incomparable achievement of uniting Jew and Gentile by his blood in his flesh through the cross in 2:13–16.

This results in nine times each in 1:3–14 and 2:11–22 and a total of eighteen times that Jesus Christ is emphasized and referred to as God's means and instrument of blessing the church. The instrumental and locative usages of the ἐν and διὰ phrases involving Christ in Eph 1–3 establish Christ's agency role in accomplishing God's purposes and bestowing God's blessings. In the discourse's honorific context, these explicatures are enriched to form Christ's honorific role as God's appointed human viceroy. Commentators have identified the uses of these prepositional phrases to portray Christ's agency role. Some scholars use the ἐν phrases as division markers to structure 1:3–14 into various divisions.[84] Lincoln and Best agree that Christ's agency role is portrayed.[85] Julien Smith's argument that Christ is characterized as God's

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[82] Ibid., 190.

[83] Danker, *Benefactor*, 352–54; Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 347; C. Leslie Mitton, *Ephesians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 128; Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 114–15. Cf. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 190.

[84] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 15–17; Dahl, *Studies in Ephesians*, 330–31.

[85] Lincoln tries to balance the agency and incorporative nuances of these prepositional phrases: "It cannot be denied that in Ephesians with its liturgical style the phrase ["in Christ"] is used with an almost formal quality and a predominantly instrumental force and refers primarily to Christ's mediation of God's activity toward his people…. But it is particularly hard to avoid the more intensive incorporative connotation in 2:6 where believers are said to have been raised and seated in the heavenly realms together with Christ 'in Christ Jesus'" (*Ephesians*, 22). Best comments, "Christ for his part mediates God's blessings to us as is emphasized by the repeated references to him, mainly through personal and relative pronouns, and Christ is depicted both in his redemptive and cosmic roles:

vicegerent resembles my proposal the most.[86] However, these scholars have not developed their ideas as an honorific concept as I have done.

Self-sacrificial (1:7; 2:13, 15, 16; 5:2, 25) and Exemplary (5:2, 25)

Various places in the discourse project Jesus Christ's profile as a self-sacrificial benefactor. His life was completely within his power to control. He had the prerogative to do what he wished yet he chose to lay down his life for the sake of humankind. Various prepositional phrases explicitly portray his self-sacrifices: "through his blood," "by the blood of Christ," "in his flesh" and "through the cross" (1:7; 2:13, 15, 16). Three of these phrases are found within 2:11–22 that explicitly describes his benefactions. Christ's self-sacrifices were not driven by the prospect of receiving greater reward or honor like common benefactors did. Instead, he was motivated by his love for the church (5:2, 25). Love is his basis, not honor or riches. This is deserving of the greatest honor possible.

Christ's love and self-sacrifices for the Church are the bases for Paul to command his audience to walk in love (5:2) and husbands to love their wives (5:25). In both instances, καθὼς is used to emphasize that Christ is the exemplar they should emulate. Moreover, the concept of παραδίδωμι in both verses is enriched by the grammatical object "himself" (ἑαυτὸν) such that in contrast to benefactors like the Caesars who gave money and wealth, things that they were

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God's eternal will is executed through Christ and the cosmos summed up in him; salvation comes through his death" (*Ephesians*, 110).

[86] Smith, *Christ the Ideal King*, 174–207. Smith summarizes according to his method, "The … overview of the poetic sequence of action in Ephesians has demonstrated that *God acts through Christ*" (194); and also, "One of the author's background assumptions appears to be that God's kingdom can also be identified with the kingdom of the Christ…. The political order that fits this state of affairs is that of a vicegerency, in which a king delegates the rule of his kingdom to a subordinate who possesses all the authority and power of the king. In both Greco-Roman and Jewish thought, the ideal king was conceived of as the vicegerent of Zeus, Jupiter, or Yahweh, respectively" (206).

expendable to them, Jesus handed over, indeed literally delivered, himself, i.e. his life, to be the offering and sacrifice (5:2). Ephesians disambiguates Christ's giving from that of other benefactors and certainly in great contrast to the Caesars. Thus, Christ's profile as self-sacrificial and exemplary is honored.

Peace and Peacemaker (2:14–17)

A set of explicature under Christ's achievements in Eph 2:11–22 triggers these honorific roles of Christ. In 2:14a, the sentence Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν highlights peace as the personification of Christ himself. The intensive use of αὐτὸς assigns the references of the antecedents of ἐστιν and of itself to Χριστός in 2:13. The possessive pronoun ἡμῶν functions as a genitive of reference relating Christ the Peace (ἡ εἰρήνη) to the one unified body comprising Jewish and Gentile believers. The concept of peace is narrowed and disambiguated from the general states of stability/tranquility and cessation of conflict/war to the person of Jesus Christ who is himself the embodiment of peace to believers, both Jews and Gentiles together.

In 2:15c, ποιῶν εἰρήνην manifests Christ's role as the Peacemaker. This participial phrase is usually related semantically to κτίζω in 2:15b as its result.[87] Alternatively, this work proposes ποιῶν as possibly the attendant circumstance participle to ἀποκαταλλάσσω in 2:16a.[88] Whether one chooses the former or latter position, peacemaking between the two formerly estranged

[87] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 380; Larkin, *Ephesians*, 41. One could also consider ποιῶν functioning as purpose or means (though less likely).

[88] This alternative is made considering the preceding location and closer proximity of ποιῶν to ἀποκαταλλάσσω, i.e. two words before ἀποκαταλλάσσω compared to six words after κτίζω. Lexically, "making peace" ποιῶν εἰρήνην has a closer sense to "reconcile" ἀποκαταλλάσσω (but distant to "found" or even "create" of κτίζω) such that it can be conceived as a coordinated action with an "*ingressive* force" emphasizing and leading the reader into the action of the main verb. As such, it need not be constrained to a limited nuance of result, purpose, or means (Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 640–43).

people is the achievement of Christ the Peacemaker. Col 1:20 uses εἰρηνοποιέω to portray Christ as peacemaker; the only time the verb is used in the NT. In Rom 5:1 Christ is the unequivocal agent through whom all believers are in a peace relationship with God (εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).[89] Comparatively, Christ's Peace and Peacemaker roles are made honorific in Eph 2:11–22.

The sentence "Christ is our Peace" (2:14a) and the participial phrase "making peace" (2:15c) are immersed among many other explicatures in 2:11–22 that highlight the functions, achievements, and purposes of Christ the Honorand and trigger Christ's honorific roles and benefactions. In the chiasm of 2:11–22 presented on p. 107, the paired elements FF′ (2:14c, 15b) demonstrate that peace (εἰρήνη) is the opposing reality to the former enmity (ἔχθραν) between Jew and Gentile and that Jesus Christ is the one who has made this transformation possible (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, ἐν αὐτῷ). In the paired elements CC′ (2:13, 17), Christ's blood (ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and his preaching of peace (ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην) are the instruments that brought the formerly far away Gentiles near.[90] Thus together, Christ the Peace and Peacemaker embodies and possesses true peace to destroy hostility, abolish the Law, reconcile conflicted

[89] Stanley Porter describes, "Although many scholars believe that the sense of 'peace' (eirēnē) depends upon the OT sense of external or material well-being, the Greek sense denoting a time or state without hostility or war fits the context better. In Greek thought 'peace' is a relational word which speaks of a state of objective well-being, leading to harmonious relations between people or nations" ("Peace, Reconciliation," *DPL* 695–99).

[90] Alternatively, one may consider the structure of Eph 2:14–16 this way:

14a D Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν,
14b E ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν
14c F καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,
15a G τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας,
15b D_1 ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην
16a E_1 καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ
16b F_1 διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ.

geopolitical peoples, found a new humanity, preach peace, and bring far-away Gentiles near. Christ is truly the one who accomplished all that was needed to unite and reconcile two estranged peoples to found the one new humanity called the church (2:14–17). Reading the explicatures in 2:14a, 15c in their honorific context reveals how Peace and Peacemaker could be honorific roles of Christ.

Lincoln also recognizes the personification of peace in 2:14a but since he was uninformed about its honorific context, he could only treat it generally as "a relational concept which presupposes the overcoming of alienation and hostility between Gentiles and Jews."[91] Best initially finds the "identification of Christ with peace … surprising" but selects instead (contrary to Lincoln) the Jewish messianic expectation of peace from Isa 9:6 is its background.[92] One can observe that without recognizing Ephesians as an honorific discourse and the multiple aspects Christ is honored in it, scholars would persistently fail to recognize the honorific aspects of these explicatures and subsequently the efficient and efficacious relevance of the Roman political concepts of peace (*Pax Augustae/Pax Romana*) as the ad-hoc concept of Christ the Peace and Peacemaker (which chs. 4 and 5 later would elaborate).

People Founder (2:15)

In 2:15b, the purpose clause ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον triggers Christ's honorific role as a "people founder." The following reasons support this proposal. First, judging from scholars' treatment of this clause, examining the indirect object (εἰς ἕνα καινὸν

[91] Lincoln writes, "Peace, in v 14, is not merely a concept nor even a new state of affairs, it is bound up with a person. Christ can be said to be not only a peacemaker or a bringer of peace but peace in person" (*Ephesians*, 140).

[92] Best, *Ephesians*, 251.

ἄνθρωπον) appears to be their main interest.[93] Although ἄνθρωπος is very often glossed as "man," its concept could also broaden to refer to the collective group of "humanity" as evidenced by Plato and Epictetus's *Discourse* 2.9.3.[94] In the context of 2:11–22 where Christ is honored for reconciling and uniting Gentiles and Jews, the phrase ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον could refer to the united humanity consisting of these two peoples as a result of Christ's achievements. This research agrees with scholars that view ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον broadly as a "third race" or a "new type of humanity."[95] However, over-working on this one issue could also cloud one's vision from the wider pragmatic use of κτίζω.

In light of Paul's lengthy treatment of the status of Israel and the Jews in Rom 9–11, the phrase "one new humanity" could raise possible questions about the "newness" or "re-newal" of this humanity and evoke tensions about its distinctiveness from and/or continuity with Israel and the Jews. While these issues are of great interest to and for the wider Pauline and NT scholarship, discussing them here is beyond the confines of this work. Nevertheless, this work does not reject the notion that Israel and the Jews remain significant in God's redemption plan,[96] recognizing that Jews comprise the other half of this "one new humanity" in Eph 2:11–22.

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[93] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 143–44; Best, *Ephesians*, 261–63; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 377–80.

[94] Henry George Liddell et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon: With a Revised Supplement*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), s.v. ἄνθρωπος, 2–3.

[95] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 144; Best, *Ephesians*, 261–63; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 379.

[96] Ben Witherington, III, and Darlene Hyatt deal with the issues succinctly in *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 236–79. "Paul must rebut the notions that God has forsaken his first chosen people, that the Word of God has failed, and that Israel has stumbled so as to be permanently lost. Underlying these rebuttals is the refutation of the assumption of Gentile superiority in the Roman church. Here as elsewhere Paul is seeking to level the playing field so as to make clear that all are 'in' the people of God by God's mercy and grace and that no one has a right to boast in his or her own accomplishments. He also wants to make clear that the salvation of Israel is still part of God's game-plan, despite how things now appear" (249). See also James D. G. Dunn's much more extensive treatment in *Romans 9–16*, WBC 38B (Dallas, TX: Word, 1998), 517–704.

Moreover, although Paul did not explicitly clarify Israel's place in the new humanity in Ephesians, his theological views in the discourse do seem to unite in a way that reflects a perspective potentially similar to that of Rom 9–11.[97]

Second, the verb κτίζω is usually thought to nuance the general activity of "creating."[98] It is used in the Pauline letters only ten times, often with God as its subject,[99] four of which are in Eph 2:10, 15; 3:9; 4:24, and almost every instance is translated "to create" by scholars and in common English translations (NASB, NKJV, NRSV, NET, NIV).[100] However, in 2:15b κτίζω is

[97] These views concern (at the least and not limited to): election/selection (Eph 1:5); predestination (1:5, 11); adoption into sonship (1:5); grace (1:6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:7, 8); mercy (2:4); kindness (1:9; 2:7); faith (1:15; 2:8); the "commonwealth of Israel" (2:12); the "covenants of promise" (2:12); the "Law of commandments in ordinances" (2:15); reconciliation (2:14–16); the apostles and prophets as the foundation of the holy temple, the recipients of the revelation of mystery, and the first two ministerial gifts to the church (2:20; 3:5; 4:11); the "mystery" (1:9; 3:3, 4, 9); Gentiles becoming "fellow citizens with the saints," "fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise" (2:19; 3:6); and the power and ability of God to do exceedingly abundantly beyond everything permissible and imaginable (3:20–21).

One could not help relate and ponder Witherington and Hyatt's commentary on Rom 9–11 and its possible similarity to Ephesians: "when Paul speaks of Israel, his concern is with the history of God's choices and historical purposes, not the history of a race" (Witherington and Hyatt, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 253–54); "[Paul] describes the remnant process to make clear how God works to create a people for his purposes. Israel was chosen or created not primarily for its own benefit, but to be a light to the nations. Paul is describing that process of election and selection for such purposes. Israel's or anyone else's salvation is not finally completed until the eschaton. Until then, there can be assurance of what is hoped for, but this assurance always stands under the proviso that one must persevere until the end of life, which is possible only by God's grace and through faith" (254); "Paul also believes that since all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory, God owes salvation to no one, and none can merit it. It is all a matter of mercy and grace. Thus God is free to choose and use whomever he will for the divine purposes, without injustice. One can be chosen for God's purposes … and not be saved. Being chosen for historical purposes and being saved are not one and the same thing. Salvation for individuals is by grace and through faith. Election, insofar as the creation of a people is involved, is largely a corporate thing" (255); "There is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles because there is one Lord over all, and this Lord is prepared to bestow blessings on one and all who call upon him" (263); and "God's free choice was not based on the remnant's works of the Law. … Paul's critique of the Mosaic Law is based on the assumption that it is obsolete, for Christ is the end of the Law as a way of righteousness. It has no power to enable a fallen person to keep it. This is a salvation-historical argument with the Christ-event being the crucial turning point" (265).

[98] BDAG, s.v. κτίζω; Werner Foerster, "κτίζω, κτίσις, κτίσμα, κτίστης," *TDNT* 3:1000–1035.

[99] Interestingly, κτίζω is used only once in Rom 1:25 but its cognate κτίσις is used seven times (1:20, 25; 8:19–22, 39). The uses of both κτίζω and κτίσις are fairly balanced in Colossians, thrice and twice respectively. However, only κτίζω is used in Ephesians.

[100] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 143–44; Best, *Ephesians*, 261–63; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 378.

uniquely the *purposeful* activity of Christ in relation to Jews and Gentiles becoming one.[101] The grammatical accusative direct object of κτίζω, τοὺς δύο, being preposed is emphasized and the force of the verb is applied on it before the resultant indirect object (εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον). Thus, the transformation of two peoples into one humanity is the distinguished work of Christ and the purpose of his other important accomplishments in 2:11–22.[102] As such, the general nuance of "create" is inadequate to fully explicate the purposeful sense of κτίζω as Christ's unique achievement in contrast to God's overarching activity of creation.

Third and crucially, in a civic and honorific context in which Ephesians participates but scholars rarely situate, the concept of κτίζω could be narrowed to the sense of "founding" or "establishing" a people or city. In classical Greek, this usage is common, evidenced in the LSJ lexicon as the top two glosses and in many literary sources such as Homer, Thycyclides, and Herodotus.[103] Long summarizes the data: "Prevalent in the inscriptions is the accolade of political personages as founders of various political entities. …[T]he titles Σωτῆρα και κτίστην 'savior and founder' is found twenty-four times and κτίστην alone nearly two hundred times in reference to founding cities."[104] As such, Paul's audiences could easily activate their knowledge of the wide pragmatic uses of κτίζω in the founding of new political entities. The strong political context and theology of Eph 2:11–22 proposed by Long also effectively enrich the concept

[101] Despite noting this, Hoehner fails to extract its significance (*Ephesians*, 378).

[102] Although Lincoln notes, "The two elements which were used in the creation have become totally transformed in the process," he retains the nuance of "create" for κτίζω (*Ephesians*, 144).

[103] LSJ, s.v. κτίζω. Literary sources include Homer's *Odyssey* 11.263 and *Iliad* 11.263, Thycyclides' *Histories* 1.12; 6.4; Herodotus' *The Histories* 1.167–168; 4.46.

[104] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 285 n. 107.

formation of κτίζω in 2:15b.[105] They could thus quickly form the *relevant* honorific and political concept that Christ's achievements are for the purpose of founding "one new humanity."

Therefore, it is reasonable to claim that 2:15b portrays Christ's honorific role as the founder of a new humanity unlimited by any geographical boundary or border. More importantly, this new humanity comprises two people groups, Jews and Gentiles, formerly separated by distance and differences in socio-political-religious aspects.

Priest (2:13–22; 3:12; 5:26–27)

Christ's honorific role as priest is not explicitly stated in Ephesians but a number of ostensive explicatures immersed in the honorific context of the discourse and the cultic setting of the pericopes could trigger it. Barth sees Christ's self-sacrifice and preaching of peace in 2:13–22 as a type of the priest's duties to offer the ready sacrifice and pronounce the Aaronite blessing.[106] As such, Barth proposes Christ is "both the causative and the cognitive agent of peace," both "priest and sacrifice at the same time."[107] Barth further views Christ's peacemaking as an act of worship that secured "political, legal, and social peace" between Jews and Gentiles and confirmed him as the true arbitrator of access to God and "sole officiant" of worship in the church.[108] Barth's translation of προσαγωγή in 2:18 and 3:12 transitively as "introduction"

[105] Ibid., 254–309.

[106] Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 266. He further comments, "From 2:13–22 on, Paul's language contains an increasing number of cultic terms and allusions. Christ is depicted not only as a statesman appointed by God to make and announce social peace between divided groups of men, but his function and work are at the same time those of the high priest: he announces peace with God and among men and thereby bestows in full what the Aaronitic blessing (Num 6:24-26) had promised" (267).

[107] Ibid., 266, 300.

[108] Ibid., 312.

instead of intransitively as "access" has not gained unanimous support,[109] possibly hindering scholars from accepting his proposal.[110] However, other data, particularly those that trigger cultic and honorific concepts, could substantiate the portrayal of Christ as a priest in Ephesians.

First, Paul's uses of many prepositional phrases in 2:11–22 repeatedly highlight Christ in an agency/intermediary role with a priestly function. The phrases ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:13), ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ (2:14c), διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ (2:16b), and δι' αὐτοῦ (2:18) altogether emphasize Christ as the mediator between Jews/Gentiles and God. While Χριστός and αὐτός consistently assign references to Christ, the nouns "blood," "flesh," and "cross" vividly depict his death by crucifixion and are his means of mediation. Barth relates the significances 1) of offering "blood" to intercession, covenant, protection, and atonement; and 2) of sacrificing "flesh" to OT concepts of peace-offering and prophetic intercession (in Exod. 32:30–32 and Isa 53) especially in the depiction of the Servant of the Lord as "'intercession for transgressors' (Isa 53:8, 10–12)."[111] Such references of "blood" and "flesh" to cultic activities are not limited to the Jewish worldview. Temple sacrifices of pagan cults and emperor worship admittedly involve shedding of flesh and blood performed by priests. In the honorific context of the discourse and of 2:11–22, "blood" and "flesh" are triggers activating the cultic concepts of sacrifices, and Christ who offers his blood and flesh as the sacrifice is thus both a benefactor and a priest.

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[109] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 149; Best, *Ephesians*, 273; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 388–89; Larkin, *Ephesians*, 43. Muddiman seems to support Barth (*Epistle*, 162–63). G. B. Caird simply assumes it "was a technical term for the right of free approach to a king's presence" (*Paul's Letters from Prison: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, in the Revised Standard Version*, The New Clarendon Bible [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976], 60).

[110] Despite recognizing the cultic background in 2:18–22, Best rejects Barth's view that Christ is portrayed as high priest (*Ephesians*, 274).

[111] Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 299–301.

In 3:11–12, the phrases "in Christ Jesus our Lord" (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν) and "in whom" (ἐν ᾧ) are abutted together and the phrase "through/because of His faithfulness" (διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ) is in a final position modifying "we have" (ἔχω).[112] As a result, Christ's agency role (instrumental sense) in both God's accomplishment of his eternal purposes (κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων ἣν ἐποίησεν, 3:11) and believers' confident access to God (ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν ἐν πεποιθήσει, 3:12) is emphasized. This "access" (προσαγωγή) references the "access … to the Father" (τὴν προσαγωγὴν … πρὸς τὸν πατέρα) in 2:18 that also results through/because of Christ (δι' αὐτοῦ).[113]

Second, the difference between the transitive and intransitive senses of προσαγωγή for the interpretation of 2:18 is minor. Best states, "believers come to God only through what Christ has done for them or as he introduces them."[114] In either case, the emphasis is on Christ based on the preposed δι' αὐτοῦ and the honorific context of 2:11–22 emphasizing him as the means (discussed in previous sub-sections). In addition, in the chiasm of 2:11–22, the antithesis between the phrase "through/because of him we have access … to the Father" (δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν … πρὸς τὸν πατέρα) in 2:18 and "godless" (ἄθεοι) in 2:12 highlights Christ is the true intermediary agent between humankind and God. Moreover, Lincoln proposes,

> That the vertical reference for peace [with God] becomes dominant in v 17 is reinforced by the elaboration of v 18 with its assertion that through Christ the two groups now have access "to the Father." So Christ proclaims a peace with God to each of the groups. But

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[112] The preference for this translation of διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ will be explained later under the sub-section "God's Human Viceroy and Agent" on p. 139.

[113] Lincoln agrees, "v 13 contains sacrificial imagery and vv 20–22 contain temple imagery, the cultic associations of προσαγωγή as unhindered access to the sanctuary as the place of God's presence must be as strong as, if not stronger than, the political" (*Ephesians*, 149).

[114] Best, *Ephesians*, 274.

> as the preceding context makes inescapably clear, this has inevitable repercussions on the horizontal level for peace between Jews and Gentiles.[115]

Thus, a direct examining of the wording in 2:17 in relation to 2:18 shows that Christ acts as a priest to achieve peace with God the Father (vertical reference) for both groups of people, those who were far away and those who were near. Although Moritz's thorough investigation of the allusion to Isa 57:19 and 52:7 in Eph 2:17 is useful for studying the use of OT in Ephesians,[116] more effort is required to process 2:17 through the OT lens and the audience, majority of whom are Gentiles, could presumably not prefer that since a more direct deduction was achievable. Barth concludes, "After Eph 2:17 proclaimed Christ in his priestly, i.e. blessing, function, 2:18 definitely ascribes to him the decisive role in divine worship."[117]

Third, the strong cultic language in 2:19–22 and 5:26–27 importantly serves as *new information* that, according to RT, is both enriched by and enriches the initial priestly concept of Christ formed in 2:13–18. The church is described as a "holy temple in the Lord" (ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, 2:21) and a "dwelling of God" (κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:22). The church, the new humanity, is this "temple," made up of Jewish and Gentile believers now identified as fellow citizens (συμπολῖται, 2:19) and God's household members (οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:19). Paul uses ναός eight times in his letters but ἱερόν only once (in 1 Cor 9:13). It is hard to establish a clear

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[115] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 148. Best is also of the view that in 2:17 "the peace that is proclaimed is that between God and Gentile and between God and Jew and not that between Gentile and Jew" (*Ephesians*, 271). Moritz acknowledges, "It is not insignificant that, especially in Isa 55–60, peace denotes both a healthy vertical relationship between God and his people as well as entry into the people of God (ch. 56.3) and therefore common worship of Israel's God (ch. 56.5–7). … [T]his is also the explicit message of Eph 2.18" (*Profound Mystery*, 52).

[116] Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 23–55.

[117] Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 268. Caird is too quick to conclude, "there is no reference to temple, sacrifice, or priesthood" (*Paul's Letters from Prison*, 60).

distinction between the nuances of ναός and ἱερόν.[118] This work focuses only on ναός since it is used more often in the Pauline corpus. The word enjoys wide usages in non-biblical literatures such as Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, and Herodotus, and in the LXX.[119] In Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* 8.3.95–97 and 15.11.417–20, ναός refers to the inner areas of the temples of Solomon and of Herod where only the priests were allowed to enter. In 2 Thess 2:4, ναός refers to a physical temple building, not necessarily the Jewish temple although it could be a close reference given the context.[120] However, Paul seems to prefer the metaphorical use of ναός, since six times he extends its concept categorically to refer to believers (1 Cor 3:16–17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16). Thus, it is plausible that Paul employs ναός in Eph 2:21–22 also as the metaphorical imagery to refer to the church comprising of both Jewish and Gentile believers now united as one new humanity. Moreover, the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ as the "keystone" (ἀκρογωνιαίου), the indispensible link that holds every one and every part altogether (2:20–21).[121] This temple is a "construction" (οἰκοδομή, 2:21) that is not confined to a geographical location or physical boundary.[122] Thus, the repeated uses of cultic language in

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[118] Gottlob Schrenk, "τὸ ἱερόν," *TDNT* 3:230–247.

[119] Otto Michel, "ναός," *TDNT* 4:880–90. See also Liddell et al., *LSJ*, s.v. ναός.

[120] F. F. Bruce judges that it refers to the "sanctuary proper, the holiest part of the temple complex, the dwelling-place of the deity" (*1 and 2 Thessalonians*, WBC 45 [Dallas: Word, 1998], 168).

[121] Lincoln discusses the two options for interpreting ἀκρογωνιαίου (*Ephesians*, 154–55). It could be a "foundation stone" or the "crowning stone or top stone" of a building (154). Barth lays out the arguments of both sides and explains why the latter is preferred (*Ephesians 1–3*, 317–19). I agree with Barth's and Lincoln's conclusions that "keystone" is more likely, and also in view of its consistency with other parts of the discourse exalting Christ as head (1:23) to whom the whole body is growing into (4:7–16), and "probably not a direct allusion to Isa 28:16" that identifies ἀκρογωνιαίου as the foundation stone (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 155). Cf. O'Brien and Hoehner who prefer "cornerstone" (O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 216–17; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 404–7).

[122] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 149.

2:19–22, the emphases on Christ as the instrument/mediator in 2:13–18 and as the keystone in 2:19–22, and the repeated listing of Christ's achievements in 2:11–22 enrich Christ's priestly role as an honorific and cultic concept.

Furthermore, three purpose clauses in 5:26, 27 ostensibly portray Christ's goals in relation to the church. Christ's love and self-sacrifice for the church (5:25) are purposed "to sanctify her" (ἵνα αὐτὴν ἁγιάσῃ, 5:26), to "present the church … in glory" (ἵνα παραστήσῃ … ἔνδοξον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, 5:27), and "in order that she would be holy and blameless" (ἵνα ᾖ ἁγία καὶ ἄμωμος, 5:27). Many proposals have been offered to explain the verbs "sanctifying" (ἁγιάζω), "cleansing" (καθαρίζω), and "presenting" (παρίστημι).[123] However, they are not much different in meaning from the ceremonial and cultic nuances these actions already possess. These cultic functions performed by Christ in 5:26–27 would efficiently enrich and be enriched by his priestly role already formed in 2:11–22. These three purpose clauses are abutted together and subordinated under one main clause in 5:25, emphasizing Christ's love and self-sacrifice as the basis and price of his priestly role respectively. The completely passive role of the church in 5:25–27 further amplifies that Christ acts on his own loving motivation and pays the price with his own life. As discussed in ch. 1, such acts of self-sacrifice are typical of benefactors. Christ's priestly role portrayed through 2:13–22; 3:12; 5:26–27 is also triggered as an honorific concept.

[123] They could be associated with various possible imageries and metaphors like ceremonial washing or bathing, bridal prenuptial bath, baptism with preaching, giving away the bride, appearing before a king to find grace, coming to a judicial court to be trialed fairly, and standing before God or a priest. See Barth, *Ephesians 4–6*, 624–29, 678–99; O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 420–26; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 750–62. The descriptions of the church as "in glory," "not having spot or wrinkle," and "holy and blameless" could refer to a manifestation of God's glory, the outward adorning of the bride, the revelation of the Son's power, and perfection.

Triumphant Victor (4:8b)

Christ's role as triumphant victor is portrayed through the phrase "he led captive a host of captives" (*ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν*), an altered portion of Ps 68:18 that Paul used in Eph 4:8b.[124] The psalm depicts God's activities against his enemies and his faithfulness to protect his people. It climaxes at Ps 68:17–18 that "summarizes the military victories that God gave to his people as he led them from Sinai to Jerusalem."[125] Although Paul's use of the psalm changes the second-person verb "you led captive" (ἠχμαλώτευσας) to the third person "he led captive" (*ἠχμαλώτευσεν*) in order to suit his purpose in Eph 4:7–10,[126] the imagery in 4:8b is identical to that in Ps 67:19a LXX—a triumphant parade where the conqueror takes captive of a host of captives. Paul has adapted this OT imagery of God's victory over his enemies in v.19a and applied it to Jesus the Jewish Messiah in Eph 4:8b.[127]

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[124] Proposals about the source text and background of Eph 4:8 has been discussed previously in sub-sections "Giving Ministers as Gifts" on p. 126 and "Authority over all and Headship" on p. 129. In addition, Moritz favors the MT/LXX as the possible source but he alludes that Qumran's "focus on leading captives captive in the War Scroll alerts us to the possibility that the inclusion of the same theme in Eph 4.8 may have been more deliberate than is usually thought" (*Profound Mystery*, 61). Harris provides evidences to argue for the Moses traditions as the background of 4:8 (*Descent of Christ*, xv, 64–104).

[125] Thielman, "Ephesians," ed. Beale and Carson, 820.

[126] Thielman states, "it seems best to think that Paul himself changed the Greek rendering of the text to suit his argument at this point in the letter. … although Paul's changes to the Greek text of Scripture are dramatic, they are consistent with the overall theological direction of the psalm from which his citation comes" (ibid., 823).

[127] Thielman asserts, "In Ephesians, Paul is … interested in the theme that God, in Christ, has triumphed over the enemies of God's people (1:20-23; 2:5-6; 3:10; cf. 6:12). Since Paul voices this theme both in his quotation of the climactic paragraph of Ps. 68 and in his interpretation of it, he may have chosen this quotation because it not only used the crucial term 'gift,' but also articulated the theme of Christ's triumph" (ibid., 824). Moritz dismisses the importance of *ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν* in the writer's mind. He states, "Christ ascended to provide the gifts necessary for the church 'to attain… the stature of the fullness of Christ' (v13), a theme reiterated in vv12, 13 and 15f. It is because of this implicit …, strong concern with the nearness of Christ that the writer refrains from elaborating on the phrase ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν" (*Profound Mystery*, 82).

Just like for the phrases *ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος* and *ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*,[128] the honorific context of Ephesians in which this phrase *ᾐχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν* is also situated facilitates triggering the honorific concept of Christ's triumphant victor role. With the person reference of the verb also assigned to Christ, Jesus the Messiah is the one victorious over his enemies and leads them captive as a host of captives. This portrayal of Christ's triumph over his enemies juxtaposes his death on the Roman cross earlier (2:13–16), i.e. as a criminal through Rome's cruelest execution method. Despite being a Jew and executed under the Roman judicial system, Jesus the Messiah is now hailed as the triumphant victor. This complete reversal of role from victim to victor is a perfect honor to Christ. Because of all his benefactions for the sake of humankind and for the church his body (2:11–22), he was bestowed the highest position of authority far above all powers and rulers and ascended on high reigning over all things far above all the heavens (1:21–23; 4:8a, 9–10), and now led captive all his enemies like a host of captives (4:8b). As such, Paul's depiction of Christ as the triumphant victor is also a disambiguated concept contrary to and in complete denial of other conquerors who gained their victories by sacrificing other soldiers' lives, not their own.

The triumphant victor would indeed be an honorific role fitting for Jesus Christ. Paul's use of Ps 68:18 and its theme of God's victory over enemies in Eph 4:8 effectively emphasizes three honorific aspects of Christ: 1) Christ's high and exalted position of authority; 2) Christ's role as the triumphant victor; and 3) Christ's benefaction of giving ministers as gifts to the church. As shall be discussed further in ch. 4, these aspects are synonymous with three ways that the emperor/general would have been represented in an actual military parade.

[128] See pp. 126 and 134–35.

Son of God and Perfect Man (4:13)

"Son of God" and "Perfect Man" titles both appear in Eph 4:13 and as such they are treated together here. The phrase εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον is often interpreted as referring to the church at a stage of τέλειος and rendered as "to a mature man." In addition to a surprising lack of interest among some scholars regarding the appearance and significance of the "Son of God" title in Ephesians, the genitive τῆς πίστεως is often assumed to be unrelated to τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ such that the first goal of the church in 4:13 has two parts, the "unity of the faith," and the "unity of the knowledge of the Son of God."[129] The exegetical challenges of interpreting 4:13 include: (1) determining the types of genitives τῆς πίστεως, τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως, and τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ and their relationships;[130] (2) clarifying the grammatical relationship between "faith" and "the Son of God;"[131] and (3) rendering τέλειος as "mature" when ἡλικίας has a similar meaning and presents a more ostensive and better/nearer contrast to "children" (νήπιοι) in 4:14 than τέλειος.[132] These interpretive difficulties, important as they are, could overshadow the possibility of treating ἄνδρα τέλειον as an honorific title of Christ.

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[129] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 255–57; Best, *Ephesians*, 400–402; O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 305–7; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 552–59. Cf. Larkin, *Ephesians*, 80.

[130] Lincoln and Hoehner judge τῆς πίστεως and τοῦ υἱοῦ as objective genitives (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 255–56; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 553). Larkin treats as τῆς πίστεως and τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως as genitives of reference and τοῦ υἱοῦ as objective genitive (*Ephesians*, 80). Barth takes τοῦ υἱοῦ as subjective genitive to both τῆς πίστεως and τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως (*Ephesians 4–6*, 489).

[131] No convincing reasons are provided as to why "faith" should *not* be grammatically related to "Son of God," e.g. Barth's "Christ's faithfulness," in the way "knowledge" is, except stressing the possible objective nuance in τῆς πίστεως, i.e. as content of faith, while remaining silent about the grammatical relationship of τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως with τοῦ υἱοῦ (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 255–56; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 553; Cf. Barth, *Ephesians 4–6*, 489).

[132] Larkin contrasts ἡλικίας against νήπιοι while treating εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον by itself (*Ephesians*, 80–81). Others contrast τέλειον with νήπιοι instead (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 256–57; Best, *Ephesians*, 401; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 555).

Barth has proposed that ἄνδρα τέλειον be interpreted as "the Perfect Man,"[133] and that together with the other titles "Son of God" and "Christ/Messiah" they describe Jesus' "oneness of faith and knowledge," perfection, and "stature of fullness" intertwined in the political-ceremonial images of him as a royal king and a bridegroom.[134] Despite his unusual translation of καταντάω as "come to meet" and unlikely suggestion that Jesus' parousia is in view in 4:13,[135] Barth's proposal contributes to this perspective: the εἰς phrases in 4:13 focus on Jesus Christ and the qualities of faithfulness, knowledge, unity, perfection and fullness of maturity that he embodies. These qualities comprise the goals that the church as a whole body is to attain when it is built up through the ministries of the saints equipped with the gifts given by Christ (2:21; 4:11–12, 16; Col 2:19). Ultimately, attaining these qualities means attaining Christ the "head" (Eph 4:15). The emphasis on Jesus Christ is achieved through the repetition of his titles "Son of God," "Perfect Man," and "Christ/Messiah," in relation to "the three political acmes of the Roman, Greek, and Jewish cultures, respectively."[136] Long proposes,

> [Τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ] would likely stress the monadic status of Jesus as The (one and only) Son of (the one and only) God. Additionally, Jesus' description as ἄνδρα τέλειον "perfect man" … would appeal to Greek philosophical thought. … Jesus as "the Christ/Messiah" would relate to the Jewish political ruler.[137]

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[133] Grammatically, there is no problem translating ἀνήρ as a definite noun and ἄνδρα τέλειον as a title. Lincoln is apprehensive about this title because of its affiliation with "the Gnostic Anthropos figure" but quickly dispels the speculation (*Ephesians*, 208, 256). Muddimann also proposes translating ἄνδρα τέλειον as "the perfect Man" (*Epistle*, 203–4).

[134] Barth, *Ephesians 4–6*, 484–96.

[135] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 255.

[136] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 297.

[137] Ibid., 297–98.

He explains that ἄνδρα τέλειον "refers to the philosophical ideal of a political ruler who excels in goodness and virtue, to be imitated by the citizens,"[138] evidenced by Blumenfeld:

> In the Classical tradition, Plato's philosopher-king is a Godlike man who follows a divine pattern and reproduces in his soul the world of unchanging harmonies and order. The philosopher-king is Plato's major contribution to the Classical constellation of political ideas… In Aristotle, the political genius is 'God among humans'; the individual in complete mastery of himself is the equal of God; the legislator has high, superhuman endowments.[139]

On these bases, ἄνδρα τέλειον could plausibly be a narrowed and disambiguated concept from ἀνήρ ἀγαθός that Paul used to serve as an honorific title for Jesus. Benefactors were very frequently identified as ἀνήρ ἀγαθός "good man."[140] This common title honors them as people of good and desirable characters whom beneficiaries ought to emulate. In view of Jesus' honorific roles and sacrificial benefactions explicated in Eph 1–3, he is worthy of honor not simply as a good man, but to become the prime exemplar and goal of every believer and of the church as "the Perfect Man." He is the perfect example for believers to honor, imitate, and grow towards.[141] Thus, the profile of Jesus Christ as the perfect and ideal human being is honored through the title "Perfect Man" (ἄνδρα τέλειον).

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[138] Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," "Christ as the Perfect Man (ἀνήρ τέλειος, anēr teleios)."

[139] Blumenfeld, *Political Paul*, 270; quoted in Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues."

[140] Danker, *Benefactor*, 318–19.

[141] Interestingly, Ignatius used τέλειος ἄνθρωπος in his letter to the Smyrnaeans 4:2 to refer to Jesus as "the perfect human being himself who brings human nature to mature expression in his incarnation, death, and resurrection." Despite the phrase τέλειος ἄνθρωπος being slightly similar to ἄνδρα τέλειον in form and in highlighting Jesus' perfection, we cannot assume Ignatius' purpose of representing Jesus this way was Paul's purpose for portraying Christ as "Perfect Man." (BDAG, s.v. τέλειος; Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 298 n. 143).

On the other hand, "Son of God," though recognized as a Christological title, is surprisingly given little attention by Ephesians scholars.[142] Paul usually uses υἱός αὐτοῦ (Rom 1:3, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 29, 32; 1 Cor 1:9; 15:28; Gal 1:16; 4:4, 6; 1 Thess 1:10; Col 1:13). Thus, the constructions υἱοῦ θεοῦ (Rom 1:4), ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ υἱὸς (2 Cor 1:19), and τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ (Gal 2:20; Eph 4:13) connote emphases. Winter finds that "Christians inserted the article … so that Jesus was 'the' son of 'the' God," while records of non-Christians using this title are anarthrous.[143] Although Paul uses both articular and anarthrous constructions of the title in his writings, Winter's finding helps to reinforce that the use of "Son of God" in Ephesians is marked. Scholars often assume these occurrences of the title refer to the Jewish Messiah.[144] However, we ought not dismiss the Hellenistic background of Jesus Christ's divine sonship. Furthermore, Paul's use of υἱοθεσία in 1:5 is helpful, indeed paramount, to highlight the honorific essence of Christ's divine sonship. While believers become children of God by adoption through Christ (Eph 1:5), Jesus' divine sonship is exclusive and irrevocable because he is God's Beloved (1:6). This honorific title is not bestowed by any counsel, but by God himself (Matt 3:17; Mark 1:9; 9:7; Luke 3:22). It emphasizes his privileged status and divine sonship.

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[142] Lincoln thinks, "too much should not be read into this. It is more likely that the writer has simply taken up a traditional Pauline Christological title … than that there were divergent views about Christ's divine sonship troubling his readers" (*Ephesians*, 256). With regard to the phrase τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, Best does not examine further although he judges "since it is the Christian faith which is at issue the son of God will be a principal element in its expression. As a title of Jesus, son of God is found in varying proportions in almost all strands of NT thought, though only here in Ephesians. Whether Jesus applied the term to himself or not, it certainly belongs to early formulations of the faith" (*Ephesians*, 400). Hoehner does nothing further than commenting on the type of genitives of the construction τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ (*Ephesians*, 306). See also Ibid.; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 281.

[143] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 71.

[144] James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, WBC 38A (Dallas, TX: Word, 1998), 14; Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 2nd ed., WBC 40 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 162; Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Dallas, TX: Word, 1998), 31.

Savior (5:23b)

In 5:23b, Paul proclaims Jesus "Savior of the body" (αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος). The title σωτήρ is used only twice in the Prison Epistles in exclusive reference to Jesus Christ (Eph 5:23; Phil 3:20), ten times in the Pastorals to refer to God and Christ (1 Tim 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; 2 Tim 1:10; Titus 1:3, 4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6), and twelve other times in the rest of the NT.[145] Steven Baugh, working with Greek inscriptions recovered in Ephesus, believes Paul used the title's honorific sense synonymously with "patron" and "benefactor" as "a polemical aside aimed at the false veneration of men who were no longer living, yet who were publicly honored as gods and saviors" in 1 Tim 4:10.[146] Similarly, William Mounce suggests Paul's preference for the title in the Pastorals is "because of its meaning in the Hellenistic culture in Ephesus. It is Jesus, not any other god or the emperor, in whom salvation resides."[147] Regarding Paul's unique pattern of using σωτήρ, Gerald Hawthorne proposes, "the imagery … sets up a contrast with the Roman emperor. Paul … opposes the head of imperial Rome with the true Emperor-Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."[148] Likewise, this work supports similar arguments that σωτήρ is used in Eph 5:23b in honor of Jesus Christ, and in association to the church, Christ's body.

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[145] Although σωτήρ does not appear in the undisputed Pauline letters, its cognates σώζω, σωτηρία, and σωτήριος are used very frequently.

[146] Steven M. Baugh, "'Savior of All People': 1 Tim 4:10 in Context," *WTJ* 54.2 (1992): 331–40. He confirms, "In Paul's day, σωτὴρ was a common title or description of men, emperors, and deities. … The surviving Greek inscriptions from that city display the use of σωτὴρ as a title or description of gods, emperors, provincial proconsuls, and local patrons" (333).

[147] William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Dallas, TX: Word, 2000), cxxxiv.

[148] Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, WBC 43 (Dallas, TX: Word, 2004), 233. He substantiates, "We may note that in an inscription in Ephesus dated AD 48 there is a designation of Julius Caesar as a visible 'god and political savior of human life.' And later, Nero will be hailed as 'savior and benefactor of the world.'" Baugh confirms, "By combining the word σωτὴρ–so often a title of the emperors–with 'citizenship,' Paul is showing that the true emperor/patron is Jesus Christ. Recall that when Paul was writing, only the Roman emperor could grant Roman citizenship as an act of patronage. This gave the emperor added political power, since the newly created

Many of Christ's benefactions to the church have been made explicit in the discourse prior to 5:23: redemption and forgiveness of sins (1:7); salvation (2:5, 8); reconciliation and unity between Jews and Gentiles (2:11–22); founding of the Church (2:15); peace (2:14–17); access to the true God (2:18–22); and gifts that build up and grow the Church as a body (4:7–16), etc. The discourse repeatedly uses praise and benefaction language to honor God and Christ in 1:3–3:21 and intensively emphasizes Christ's benefactions in 2:11–22 and 4:7–16.[149] According to RT, this accumulation of Christ's benefactions become the discourse's and the audience's knowledge base to process Paul's use of σωτήρ at 5:23b. Σωτήρ is the center of the chiasm (shown below) emphasizing Christ's special relationship as Savior to the church, his body. While Christ is Savior to all men in 1 Tim 4:10, he is more specifically claimed as Savior of the church in Eph 5:23.[150] This does not mean Paul denies salvation is for all people; rather, it is simply that, in Ephesians, Paul reserves and relates Christ's Savior title and honor exclusively in relation to the church, just as a man married to a woman is exclusively related to her.

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citizens were thus bound by personal loyalty (*pietas*) to their patron as his clients" ("'Savior of All People,'" 333, n.17).

[149] Hoehner rightly states, "Although nowhere else in the NT is Christ called the 'savior of the body,' it fits with this epistle, namely, Christ's redemption of individual sinners resulting in reconciliation to God and also to each other within the body of believers" (*Ephesians*, 743).

[150] Baugh, "'Savior of All People'"; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, cxxxii–cxxxv.

Illustration 3.4. Chiastic Structure of Ephesians 5:22–24[151]

22 αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,
23 A ὅτι ἀνήρ ἐστιν κεφαλὴ
B τῆς γυναικὸς
C ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ
D τῆς ἐκκλησίας,
E ø αὐτὸς σωτὴρ
E´ τοῦ σώματος·
24 D´ ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία ὑποτάσσεται
C´ τῷ Χριστῷ,
B´ οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες
A´ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐν παντί.

Jesus Christ is the divine agent and human viceroy through whom God works his blessings and purposes in Eph 1:3–14, 2:1–10 and 3:2–13. Furthermore, he is the people founder, Peace and peacemaker, and priest of the new humanity comprising Jewish and Gentile Christians (2:11–22). He is also the triumphant victor and the Savior. These honorific roles of Christ are explicated repeatedly, densely and strategically through the discourse, especially chs. 1–3.

Jesus Christ the Great and Ideal Benefactor

This chapter demonstrates that the explicatures honoring Jesus Christ are voluminous and repetitive, densely packed, amplified, and strategically located. They are grouped into six categories that overlap to manifest Christ's benefactions, authority, and honorific roles and profile. In these ways, Ephesians portrays Jesus as the Great Benefactor to all believers and the church, the same grand status of honor that Danker has concluded and attributed to Christ from

[151] This structure is taken from Long, *In Step with God's Word*, "Chapter 5: Lexical Research," 205. Best also presents a chiastic structure with less levels but the same center at 5:23b αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος· (Best, *Ephesians*, 537; Larkin, *Ephesians*, 129).

his examination of other parts of the NT. Furthermore, Jesus Christ fits the expectations of being an ideal benefactor.

T. R. Stevenson theorizes the working of a "general ideal model" governing the relationships between benefactor and beneficiary, and tyrants and subjects "in the Graeco-Roman world whenever a power differential was felt."[152] Stevenson substantiates his claim firstly with evidences from Seneca's *De Beneficiis* and a series of philosophical works from Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, and Plutarch that describe the relationship between parents and children reflecting this ideal model.[153] He demonstrates how it is used to portray the relationship Greek founders and saviors had with their states and citizens.[154] He further proves how its use to describe Zeus and good kings in the massive Greek kingship literature granted the Romans a way to apply it to the emperor.[155] He describes the model as follows,

> Self-interest and the ultimate gift of life govern the distinction. The ideal benefactor, who gives, nourishes or protects life, does not think of a return because he is unselfish; the ideal beneficiary thinks wholly in terms of a return because he is not concerned about exploitation (i.e. he is concerned with the benefactor's interests rather than his own). The tyrant, who takes, undermines or imperils life, is completely self-interested, though he may pretend otherwise; his oppressed subjects do not reciprocate voluntarily but under compulsion (i.e. they have a real concern for self-preservation, though they may also pretend otherwise).[156]

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[152] T. R. Stevenson, "The Ideal Benefactor and the Father Analogy in Greek and Roman Thought," *ClQ* 42.2 (1992): 421–36; T. R. Stevenson, "The 'Divinity' of Caesar and the Title *Parens Patriae*," in *The Ancient Near East, Greece, and Rome*, vol. 1 of *Ancient History in a Modern University*, ed. T. W. Hillard et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 257–68.

[153] Stevenson, "Ideal Benefactor," 425–29.

[154] Ibid., 429–31.

[155] Ibid., 431–35.

[156] Stevenson, "'Divinity' of Caesar," 261.

If this ideal model is indeed an accurate depiction of Greco-Roman perspectives towards benefactor-beneficiary relationships, then it is not an overstatement to say that based on all that has been presented thus far in Ephesians, Jesus Christ undoubtedly measures up to the Greco-Roman ideal as a benefactor. He is *the* Ideal Benefactor as far as the first century expectation of an ideal benefactor is concerned. Using Stevenson's terminology, Jesus Christ is "characterized by selflessness," "gives and sustains life from no self-interested motives," and is "unconcerned about recompense" as the ideal benefactor to the Church. As an ideal beneficiary, he is "only too willing to commit himself sincerely and completely to the cause of the ideal benefactor,"[157] in this case, God, who has appointed him as his agent, exalted him to the highest position of authority, and purposed the summation of all things in him (Eph 1:10).

This ideal benefactor-beneficiary model chiefly affects ancient views about Greek founders and saviors. It was readily adopted by the Roman emperors in the ruler cults, each of whom was a "virtuous benefactor" of "life-giving benefaction" and "hailed as a savior, a benefactor, a father, a god" to their beneficiaries.[158] In the first two centuries AD in particular, honors like *pater patriae* and *civilis princeps* accorded to the Caesars are congruent to such idealistic expectations of them.[159] As such, an instant and relevant comparison is set up between Jesus Christ and the Caesars as great benefactors. This would naturally involve comparing the political bodies that they are closely associated with: the church and the Roman Empire respectively.

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[157] Stevenson, "Ideal Benefactor," 424.

[158] Stevenson, "'Divinity' of Caesar," 261.

[159] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 278.

Through the extensive and amplified honors Paul attributes to Christ in Ephesians demonstrated in this chapter, Christ emerges as the unsurpassed great benefactor and all-powerful ruler. The Caesars are subverted in the implicit challenge pitched between them. In order to arrive at this efficacious conclusion, we turn to the next chapter to first establish how the political and religious honors of the Caesars are efficient ad-hoc concepts triggered by the honors of Christ.

CHAPTER 4. THE CAESARS, THE EMPIRE'S BENEFACTORS

I have argued in the previous chapters that Ephesians participates in the ancient honorific convention of praising benefactors, and that its explicatures of Jesus Christ honor him as the Great and Ideal Benefactor. According to the cognitive and communicative principles of Relevance Theory (RT), these explicatures of Christ would have triggered the formation of ad-hoc concepts supplied by the cognitive environment shared by Paul and his audience, and these ad-hoc concepts are of optimal relevance for the interpretation of these explicatures.[1] The workings of these principles enabled Paul's audience to expend as little processing effort as possible in order to harvest as much cognitive effects as possible such that they would have been able to interpret the explicatures efficiently and efficaciously. The *shared cognitive environment* (SCE) common to both Paul and his audience enabled them to derive the most *relevant* implicature for interpreting the discourse.

I argue that the Caesars and the honors bestowed upon them are efficiently triggered as *optimally relevant ad-hoc concepts* of the explicatures of Christ in Ephesians.[2] Epigraphic,

[1] Explanation and examples of *ad-hoc concept formation* processes are given in the section "Reconstruction of the Shared Cognitive Environment of a Biblical Discourse" in ch. 1. Formations of ad-hoc concepts begin as soon as triggers are encountered in the discourse. Initial stages of concept formation of the explicatures of Jesus Christ have been described in the previous chapter.

[2] As mentioned in ch.1, this work follows Bruce W. Winter's use of "the Caesars" in his latest book *Divine Honours for the Caesars: The First Christians' Responses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015). While Winter uses it to refer to *all* the Roman emperors, this work focuses only on the emperors from Augustus to Nero.

monumental, structural, statuary, jewel, numismatic, and literary evidences demonstrate that the Caesars were ubiquitously honored in the first century. These artifacts manifest the Caesars' honorific roles, benefactions, profile and authority, portraying and legitimizing the Caesars as great political benefactors of the Roman Empire.[3] Moreover, the Caesars received divine honors and people worshipped them as gods in their imperial cults. Their renown, proclaimed through a variety of visual images and symbols, coupled with their great, political and divine honors meant that they would be readily and regularly at the forefront of the minds of the populace in Asia Minor. Furthermore, these political and divine honors of the Caesars resemble the honors of Christ in Ephesians so closely that (1) they would have been *efficiently* activated and processed as *ad-hoc concepts*, and (2) significant point-counterpoint comparisons between them would have been made to generate *efficacious* cognitive gains for the audience. Alternate themes/concepts supposedly activated by Paul's explicatures of Christ are judged to be inefficient in view of 1) Ephesians' audience composition (majority Gentiles) and honorific context, and 2) for processing the honorific concepts of Christ in the discourse. Thus in this chapter, I will demonstrate that the Caesars' political and religious honors are *historically available* and are *optimally relevant* in *efficiency* for processing the explicit honors of Christ in Ephesians. Consequently (together with ch. 5), the SCE of Ephesians is shown to be the Roman

[3] Wright states: "The evidence now available, including that from epigraphy and archaeology, appears to show that the cult of Caesar, so far from being one new religion among many in the Roman world, had already by the time of Paul's missionary activity become not only the dominant cult in a large part of the empire, certainly in the parts where Paul was active, but was actually the means … whereby the Romans managed to control and govern such huge areas as came under their sway. The emperor's far-off presence was made ubiquitous by the standard means of statues and coins (the latter being the principal mass medium of the ancient world), reflecting his image throughout his domains; he was the great benefactor, through whom the great blessings of justice and peace, and a host of lesser ones besides, were showered outwards upon the grateful populace–who in turn worshipped him, honored him, and paid him taxes" ("Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire," 161).

political-religious environment of the Empire supplying these political and religious honors of the Caesars.

The Ubiquitous Honors of the Caesars

The Caesars were renowned figures of the Roman world. After Octavian successfully eliminated his rivals to avenge Julius Caesar's death and became Caesar Augustus, Rome's order of governance began to transform from the old Republican system into a monarchy under one emperor and his imperial family. N. T. Wright offers, in my view, one of the most succinct descriptions of this transformation and how the Jewish community would have viewed it and been affected by it.[4] The ubiquitous spread of the Caesars' honors, roles, powers, and authority is achieved through many different means. Compared to common benefactors who were honored with a few stone inscriptions or statues placed nearby the buildings or public works they had built or contributed to their establishment, the Caesars were honored through a vast array of means including official decrees, inscriptions, statues, coins, monumental structures, buildings, temples, theatres, and parades. Paul Zanker's seminal work demonstrates the pervasiveness of the Caesars' "visual language" and "visual imagery" over time accomplished through "'works of art,' buildings, and poetic imagery, … religious ritual, clothing, state ceremony, the emperor's conduct and forms of social interaction."[5] Statues, coins, bust portraits, monuments and friezes

[4] Wright, "Rome and the Challenge of Empire," 279–347.

[5] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 3. Harry O. Maier also states, "Whether initiated by the emperor or local elites, theatres, baths, temples, statues, games and festivals … were critical to the production of a shared political culture and the communication of a set of ideals related to the emperor and the benefits of his rule. Whatever they actually did in real life, or believed about the ideals they advertised, emperors and local elites alike exploited these media and civic occasions as a means toward assuring their political legitimacy and social rank. … [C]entral to the visual repertoire of iconography initiated by both Rome and provincial elites was the representation of the emperor as triumphant military commander and the subjugation of his enemies. Such imagery was a means both to acknowledge the power and domination that assured Rome's political domination of its territories and to express to their viewers that they were the beneficiaries of empire through Rome's maintenance of the power of local elites. The visual

on them, and tomb and grave monuments of well known dictators, heroes, generals, rich men, and aristocrats were already familiar expressions of honors in the late Republican period; "Pompeii already had a stone theatre, public baths, and probably a gymnasium as well."[6] Wright outlines the use of this "material culture" as the "rhetoric of the Empire" to propagate the good news and greatness of Augustus' rise to power.[7] These different means of mass media would continue to serve as the mechanisms the Caesars employed to display their powers, promote their cults, and proclaim their greatness to different audiences and people: the elite, the religious, the foreigners, and even the illiterate.

During Paul's time, large, unique, and one-of-a-kind monuments and structures like the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, the Mausoleum, and the tall obelisk sundial called the Solarium Augusti, stood out from their surrounding landscape and attracted people's attention.[8] Many scholars have studied the *Ara Pacis* in particular.[9] These three structures functioned together to project the image of Augustus as the designated ruler of Rome and the Savior of the Roman people. Monuments like these were also established during Tiberius' reign, the *Ara Pietatis Augustae*

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world created by public buildings, monuments, temples and statues represents the activities of elites producing art for other elites. But from the perspective of non-elite viewers, amongst whom we should place the readers of the Pauline letters, such visual media played a central role in portraying overarching social ideals and the celebration of imperial achievements, as well as civic hopes and expectations. The popularity of these codes is attested by their penetration into the non-elite levels of society. … Numismatic imagery was designed to communicate to the predominantly illiterate urban populations of the Roman Empire imperial values and hoped for outcomes" (*Picturing Paul in Empire*, 10).

[6] Zanker, *Power of Images*, ch. 1, "Conflict and Contradiction in the Imagery of the Dying Republic," 25.

[7] Wright, "Rome and the Challenge of Empire," 294–98.

[8] Ibid., 296.

[9] Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, 7–32; Torelli, *Roman Historical Relief*, 27–61; Zanker, *Power of Images*, 120–25; Kellum, "Narrative Structure and the Ara Pacis Augustae," 26–45; Castriota, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, 1–174; Lamp, "Ara Pacis Augustae," 1–24; Lamp, "The Augustan Political Myth," 38–57; Podles, "Ara Pacis Augustae," 62–63.

being one.[10] While these unique monuments were located in Rome and not replicated in other places, many imperial cult temples and shrines promoting the worship of the emperor existed in one hundred and four locations across twenty different regions of Asia Minor and instilled in the people a constant reminder of the Caesars' claims of divinity.[11] Long asserts, "between the years 35BC to 60AD, approximately fifty-two imperial temples and shrines have been found and identified in Asia Minor."[12] "Inscriptions from all over Italy testify to the existence of temples, priests and sacrifices to the living emperor, and the evidence is in fact most abundant from Augustus' reign," states Ittai Gradel.[13]

In addition, statues created a constant and lifelike presence of these emperors wherever they were set up. The famous cuirassed statue of Augustus at Prima Porta, dressed in armor with detailed carvings of Roman deities on the breastplate and standing in an imposing and commanding posture of a warring general, portrays him as "the representative of divine providence and the will of the gods."[14] A statue of Gaius Caesar wears a breastplate of a similar design and speaks not only "that the young prince assumes the role of Augustus, but the allusions to the victory at Actium and the Golden Age," and "assures the continuity of the well-being first created by Augustus at Actium."[15] On the other hand, statues of Augustus dressed in a toga

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[10] Torelli, *Roman Historical Relief*, 63–88. Pictures can be found on Plates III.20–29.

[11] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 249–74.

[12] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 262–63. Photographs of the Temple of Roma and Augustus, typical of imperial cult temples, can be found in Zanker, *Power of Images*, 312–13.

[13] Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 77.

[14] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 189–92. See also Barbara Levick, *Augustus: Image and Substance* (Edinburgh: Pearson, 2010), 255–57.

[15] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 223–24.

reminded people of his priestly role as Pontifex Maximus and other similar ones that were found in imperial temples and shrines impressed people that he was divine and to be worshipped.[16] In S. R. F. Price's catalogue of imperial cult structures, it is not uncommon to find statues, coins, and inscriptions listed among the items found in them.[17] Statues were also erected at prominent places at city centers easily visible to all. Carvings on friezes also announced the honors of the Caesars.[18] One good example would be the friezes on the sides of the *Ara Pacis* that display the imperial family in a procession celebrating the victory Augustus had won at Actium and the peace he had secured for the Empire.[19]

Lastly, coins that circulated throughout the different strata of Roman society spread the Caesars' fame wherever they exchanged hands. From the low-valued copper *quadrans* and *as*, or the brass *semis* commonly considered money of the poor, to the silver *denarius* and gold *aureus* of the rich, coins bear the titles and images of the Caesars (and those members of the imperial family) claiming their power, authority and divinity.[20] They ensured that illiterate common folk would also become familiar with the Caesars and their achievements and claims. Thus, before becoming emperor, Octavian's portrait already appeared on three reverse sides of a set of six coins with images of Pax, Venus and Victoria on the obverse sides and the words CAESAR

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[16] Ibid., 126–29.

[17] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 249–74.

[18] Zanker has a picture of a "frieze of weapons from an Augustan marble building in Turin, perhaps an honorific arch" (*Power of Images*, 313).

[19] Simon, *Ara Pacis Augustae*, Plates 3.1–2, 10.2, 11, 13–19; Torelli, *Roman Historical Relief*, Plates II.15–23.

[20] Van Meter, *Handbook of Roman Imperial Coins*, 1–5, 10–11, 20–43.

DIVI F[ilius] imprinted, proclaiming him as "son of God."[21] David Van Meter's extensive study and catalog of Roman imperial coins from 27 BC onward states,

> The first appearance of portraits of rulers on Roman coins was a direct by-product of the dawning of the Imperial era. … The appearance of the portrait on the coins was a constant reminder to solders of just who ultimately controlled their pay, and always served to remind merchants and citizens of the fiat and taxation powers of the emperor.[22]

Jesus' famous reference to the portrait of Caesar on the denarius taken from a random person in the crowd in reply to the Pharisees' and Herodians' crafty trap about paying taxes to Caesar in Mark 12:15–17 demonstrates the wide circulation of Roman imperial coins and the successful transmission and reception of the Caesars' desires, authority, and power.

During Augustus' reign, almost one hundred and fifty different coin designs had been minted bearing his portrait, name or titles. By the end of Nero's reign, at least another one hundred other designs were used by the Caesars but their portraits, names and titles continued to be stamped on the coins.[23] Van Meter lists six categories of designs of the reverse side referencing "1) military or diplomatic events, 2) religious events or deities, 3) deeds, honor and rank of the emperor, 4) public buildings and temples, 5) civil or military affairs, and 6) good traits of the emperor."[24] Larry Kreitzer attests, "Roman Imperial coins lend themselves to propaganda purposes. … Imperial mints were continually involved in striking new images,

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[21] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 53–55. Zanker explains "the sequence [of the images] was programmatic, matching each of the *topoi* in Octavian's speech before the battle [of Actium], as it is recorded … in Dio Cassius…: allusions to previous accomplishments, divine protection, and the blessings of peace won through victory in battle" (53).

[22] Van Meter, *Handbook of Roman Imperial Coins*, 23.

[23] Ibid., 65–87.

[24] Ibid., 23–31.

moulding and shaping public opinion in light of the political demands of the day."[25] Winter states "Coins were … important as propaganda tools because they conveyed a deliberate message to those who used them in the marketplace where all commercial transactions occurred, including the purchase of daily needs."[26] In addition, provincial cities also minted coins bearing "representations of members of the imperial family," and in doing so "demonstrated their alleged close relationship and a more personalized expression of that relationship, to the ruling Romans."[27]

Thus, the Caesars' honors were ubiquitous. Louise Revell describes the effect of being immersed in such an environment on the populace:

> The statues and inscriptions bearing the images and the names of the emperors, whether living or deceased, all had the effect of reproducing the physical being and the authority of the emperor within the everyday lives of the inhabitants of any community. Both through the act of erecting these memorials and through the repeated viewing of them, the people of these towns accepted his authority, recreating the ideology that the emperor was justified in holding ultimate political power. To be confronted by such an image and to acknowledge its significance was to replicate and to legitimate this power.[28]

These varied means of public honors proclaimed the renowned Caesars through the Empire such that their claims of power and authority, both political and divine, were readily and regularly brought to the minds of Roman citizens and foreigners alike in Asia Minor. In these ways, the honors of the Caesars were *historically available* to Paul and his audiences and would be easily activated and efficiently processed as *ad-hoc concepts* of the explicit honors of Christ.

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[25] Kreitzer, *Striking New Images*, 22.

[26] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 11.

[27] Horster, "Coinage and Images," 258. Winter cites a coin from Apamea in Bithynia and Pontus bearing the official name and title of Augustus (*Divine Honours*, 64–65).

[28] Louise Revell, *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 89.

The Caesars were honored as Political Benefactors

Among the vast visual symbols, images and representations honoring the Caesars, the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* is arguably one of the most detailed. This elaborate inscription records Augustus' achievements and benefactions and also depicts his honorific roles, profile and authority as an outstanding benefactor.[29] Scholars agree that the *Res Gestae* is a politically motivated honorific document.[30] Moreover, a few unique features of the *Res Gestae* surface the possible political-religious intents of Augustus' honorific concepts manifested in it.

First, the *Res Gestae* is explicitly autobiographical. Contrary to normal inscriptions decreed by the city council honoring benefactors in the third person,[31] the *Res Gestae* is written in the first person focusing heavily on Augustus himself. Although the senate is often mentioned as proposing and approving the honors bestowed on Augustus and his sons (*Res Gestae* 1, 4, 6, 9, 11–14, 34–35), it is neither the proposer nor the authority of the *Res Gestae* inscription, unlike

[29] Danker, *Benefactor*, 256–80. Danker captures the different honorific aspects of Augustus by titling each chapter with an honorific title or a benefaction of Augustus.

[30] John Scheid, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Hauts Faits Du Divin Auguste* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007), XLIII–LIII; Cooley, *Res Gestae*, 34, 35, 37. Cooley advocates, "The *RGDA* conveys the implicit message that the Roman empire was in the best possible condition, through the actions of one man, Augustus, who had solved all the problems, and who ruled in the interests of all through his *auctoritas* and virtues, without infringing sovereignty of the senate and people of Rome. It was, in effect, a demonstration that Augustus had achieved his avowed intent of becoming the 'originator of the best order' (*optimi status auctor*), and had fulfilled his hope of laying lasting 'foundations for the state' (*fundamenta rei p.*). This echoes a motif on coins minted at Rome by L. Mescinius Rufus in 16 BC, which depicted on their obverse an inscription within an oak wreath, commemorating the fulfillment of a vow to Jupiter for the health of Augustus because 'through him, the state is in a greater and more peaceful condition'" (36).

M. Santirocco proposes a number of political messages in the *Res Gestae*, namely, "constitutional change was really continuity;" "military *potestas* was less important as a basis for rule than was *auctoritas*;" "the impulse towards autocracy … was actually based on popular consensus;" "public and private interests could in fact coincide, at least in the person of the *princeps*;" "vengeance was displaced by *clementia*;" "civil wars were really fights with foreign foes;" and "war itself was effectively peace" ("Horace and Augustan Ideology," *Arethusa* 28 [1995]: 225–43).

[31] Winter, "Public Honouring," 88, 90.

common inscriptions honoring benefactors.[32] In fact, Augustus stated that he chose the senate thrice, asserting himself to be more powerful and authoritative.[33] Augustus' ostensive intent to be memorialized and to ensure people never forget his legacy as long as the Roman Empire remained cannot be missed.

Second, although the original inscriptions in Latin and Greek were set in bronze and erected in front of the Mausoleum in Rome, three other copies were set up in the province of Galatia in central Asia Minor, namely Ancyra, Apollonia and Pisidian Antioch. It is also speculated, "other copies of the *RGDA* may … be found in a different province."[34] The Greek version was found at Ancyra in the temple of Rome and Augustus, and at Apollonia on the large base beneath the statues of five members of the imperial family.[35] It is not a literal word-for-word translation from the Latin but is of "more proficient" Greek compared to "translations of senatorial decrees" and "bears a greater resemblance to an edict … issued by the governor of Galatia early in Tiberius' reign."[36] As such, Alison Cooley proposes that the Greek *Res Gestae* was targeting "an audience far from Rome" and "designed to be comprehensible to a provincial audience, and in some cases even tailored to its sentiment."[37] Compared to the Latin copies, the

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[32] The senate is first mentioned at *Res Gestae* 1.2 by ἡ σύνκλητος ἐπαινέσασά με ψηφίσμασι προσκατέλεξε τῆι βουλῆι Γαΐωι Πάνσαι καὶ Αὔλωι Ἱρτίωι "the senate passed decrees in praise of me and enrolled me into the senate in the consulship of Gaius Pansa and Aulus Hirtius" (Cooley, *Res Gestae*, 59). The verb "to vote" is used in many of these instances. In *Res Gestae* 35.1, the δῆμος τῶν Ῥωμαίων "people of Rome" was also invoked to hail Augustus as πατέρα πατρίδος "Father of the fatherland" (ibid., 101).

[33] *Res Gestae* 8.2 states τὴν σύνκλητον τρὶς ἐπέλεξα "I selected the senate three times" (Cooley, *Res Gestae*, 67).

[34] Ibid., 22.

[35] Ibid., 3–18.

[36] Ibid., 26 n. 143.

[37] Ibid., 19, 26.

Greek *Res Gestae* is reduced in "imperialist tone, emphasizing instead Augustus' role as a donor and benefactor, and playing down his role as a conqueror,"[38] making him accessible and favorably disposed to the masses in Asia Minor.

Third, the *Res Gestae* is a recognized political document with a potential-religious agenda. Cooley proposes its religious function: "Augustus may have written the work as a way of justifying his deification and of encouraging the senate to expedite the process."[39] Citing Paulus Fabius Maximus' order in 9 BC to inscribe in the temple of Rome and Augustus in Latin and Greek the implementation of the new calendar in honor of Augustus as a precedence of the *Res Gestae*,[40] Cooley further suggests that the provincial council of Galatia could have prompted the work and that the "local élite may well have played a significant part in setting up the *RGDA* in their towns" for "the development of emperor worship on a provincial level."[41]

Taken together, these features suggest that intrinsic within the *Res Gestae* were calculated attempts made to legitimize Augustus' political and religious powers. Augustus' honors and impressive achievements memorialized in the *Res Gestae* were the center of these legitimizing efforts and continuously proclaimed him as a great political benefactor deserving of the people's support. As such, the rest of the Caesars would have the advantage of capitalizing

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[38] Ibid., 30.

[39] Ibid., 41.

[40] Ibid., 21–22. Another former occurrence was at "the solar reckoning of the Julian calendar, developed in 46 B.C.E., replace the local lunar method, but with the retention of the Macedonian names of the months, except that the first month, beginning on 23 September, be called 'Caesar' instead of 'Dios'" (Danker, *Benefactor*, 215, §33).

[41] Cooley, *Res Gestae*, 22. The creation of the Greek *Res Gestae* could also be a directive from Rome or an initiative of the provincial communities alone, but these options seem less likely (18–22).

on Augustus' impressive records and goodwill in the minds of the population to claim power and continue to be regarded as great benefactors of the Empire.

The rest of this section presents the Caesars' honors. The ubiquity of the Caesars' honors and the close resemblances of Augustus' politically and religiously motivated honors in the *Res Gestae* with the honors of Christ in Ephesians enable the audience to easily recall and efficiently activate them as relevant ad-hoc concepts to process Christ's honors. Since the Caesars' honors were more widely publicized than Christ's honors, they would often be activated by *broadening* of concepts. In occasions when the Caesars' concepts comprised more specific nuances or meanings, *narrowing* of concepts occur. *Disambiguation* and *enrichment* of concepts take place when surrounding words further modify the initial concepts, creating contrasts and comparisons of the honors that produce efficacious effects. While the *Res Gestae* supplies the majority of the Caesars' honorific concepts, other structural, numismatic, statutory and literary evidences reinforce them and proclaim other Caesars' honors not mentioned in the *Res Gestae*. Thus, the Roman political-religious environment, in which the Caesars' honors (particularly and beginning with those of Augustus) were cognitively understood, is repeatedly found to be the cognitive environment shared by Paul and his audience and relevant for the honors of Christ in Ephesians.

The Viceroy of Providence and Representative of Jupiter-Zeus

A major role of Augustus was the divine agent of Providence and Jupiter-Zeus sent to rule Rome and the Empire. Three monuments, the *Ara Pacis*, the Solarium Augusti, and the Mausoleum, work in tandem with one another to this effect.[42] The *Ara Pacis* was built to commemorate Augustus' final victory over his enemies at the battle of Actium. Named after

[42] Ibid., 6.

Augustus, it perpetually honors him for bringing peace to the Empire. The side friezes portray Augustus and the imperial family in a sacrificial procession, donned in priestly toga attire. The west front features Aeneas and Mars with Romulus and Remus, and the east front Roma and Tellus/Italia. These friezes narrate the chronological relationship between Augustus (with his family) and the Roman gods and past heroes.[43] Kathleen Lamp advocates that the *Ara Pacis* "functioned both immediately as a war monument of sorts, but also as an enduring piece of rhetoric meant to legitimize Augustus's rule and promote the Julian line," from the standpoint that "rhetors utilized the audience's memory, as triggered by buildings and monuments, for rhetorical purposes."[44] This basis is also applicable for the Solarium Augusti and Mausoleum. The Solarium Augusti was

> [t]he gigantic…largest sundial ever built. A 30-meter-tall Egyptian obelisk served as pointer (*gnomon*), casting its shadow on a distant network of markings… It was so contrived that on Augustus's birthday the *gnomon* pointed to the nearby Ara Pacis Augustae, recalling that at his birth the constellation of stars had already determined his reign of peace: *natus ad pacem*. The sundial was an incredible monument…. The

[43] Kathleen Lamp explains "The mythic scenes serve to launch the narrative on the *Ara Pacis* by recalling the founding myth in the minds of the Roman people. Rhetorically this would be an extremely convincing way to gain common ground with a Roman audience, as the founding myth held shared cultural value. The scenes also permit Augustus to invite comparison between himself and Aeneas and Romulus by Roman audiences. In addition, the founding myths portray the pedigrees of Augustus and the Julian line, a standard beginning in epideictic rhetoric. The myths allow Augustus to introduce the themes of fate, piety, and violence legitimized in the mythic and collective history of the Roman people. The narrative on the *Ara Pacis* begins in mythic time and suggests the ancestors of Augustus founded the city with the gods' favor" ("Ara Pacis Augustae," 13).

[44] Ibid., 2, 4. Lamp concludes "The collective past that begins the altar's narrative was likely a highly effective starting point with most Roman people. These scenes establish that Aeneas and Romulus founded Rome with the favor of the gods and at their command. In addition, the scenes tie Augustus's lineage back to Aeneas and therefore to Venus while also connecting the Roman people back to Romulus. These scenes serve to establish the idea of Augustus as fated ruler of Rome, Rome as center of the world, and the coming of the Golden Age. The altar then moves into the present and Augustus is depicted similarly to Aeneas. Augustus has fulfilled his fate and through piety has restored Rome to its rightful place in the world and regained the gods' favor. In addition, the north and south friezes establish the concept of succession as a Republican tradition. The processional scenes also invite the Roman people to think of the hardship they endured during the civil wars when the priesthoods where left empty and temples abandoned. The final mythic scenes of *Tellus* and *Roma* end the narrative, reminding the Roman people of Rome's supremacy and their own prosperity. The narrative as well as the surroundings including the mausoleum strongly suggests that the abundance brought to the people can only be maintained through continued rule of the Julian line. The *Ara Pacis Augustae* delivers a persuasive message about the importance of recognizing the Julian successor of Augustus" (20).

> inscriptions were also given in Greek, apparently as a gesture to the many residents and visitors to Rome from the East.[45]

Furthermore, the Mausoleum was situated not far from the *Ara Pacis* and the Solarium. Altogether, these three structures created a symbolic formation with an implicated message as proposed by some:

> The sides of the obelisk are…parallel with the Via Flaminia, and a line through the obelisk and perpendicular to the road will pass through the centre of the Ara Pacis. The obelisk is the right-angled corner of a right-angle triangle. … The obelisk … tells how Augustus was the right man to manage his father's calendar; the Mausoleum stresses Augustus' commitment to Rome … and the Ara Pacis alludes to the "bloodstained Octavian who was transformed into Augustus, bringer of peace".[46]

These structures, each on its own and together in their relative positions to one another, proclaimed Augustus as the one whom the gods had purposed to carry out all that had been accomplished by him. Together with the *Res Gestae*, these structures and monuments continued to be an enduring reminder to the populace even after Augustus' death.

In a move of originality, the proconsul of Asia, Paulus Fabius Maximus, wrote to the Asian League proposing that Caesar Augustus' birthdate be officially set as the first day of a new year. He described Augustus as "the good and common fortune of all" at a time when "everything was collapsing and falling into disarray" and "the entire world … would have been happy to accept its own ruin."[47] This was met with agreement by the Asian League, which responded with two decrees honoring Augustus as a savior given by Providence and detailing

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[45] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 144. Podles notes that it was "surmounted by a globe representing both the earth and the cosmos" and that "In [Augustus'] own view, there was a direct line from his birth to Pax: he was born to bring a long-sought peace to the world" ("Ara Pacis Augustae," 63).

[46] Levick, *Augustus: Image and Substance*, 216. Levick provides a helpful diagram (ibid., 215). See also P. J. Heslin, "Augustus, Domitian and the so-Called Horologium Augusti," *JRS* 97 (2007): 1–20.

[47] Danker, *Benefactor*, 216.

their intended actions and praise to the proconsul for his pious proposal.[48] Augustus, in *Res Gestae* 1.2–4 with vocabulary consistent of honorific decrees, also reiterates that 1) he was the senate's choice to be given the "rods of office … as *propraetor* together with the consuls the task of taking precautions that nothing should harm the state," and 2) that "the people appointed me consul and chose me for the office of triumvir in charge of the settled order of the state."[49] These monuments and documents demonstrate that Augustus was widely recognized and highly acclaimed as the viceroy of Providence divinely appointed to be the empire's great benefactor.

Furthermore, Augustus was associated with Jupiter-Zeus as "the gods' representative on earth;"[50] and so were Tiberius, Caligula and Nero.[51] Evidences show that "gentile audience(s) would have been well acquainted with Jupiter-Zeus and recognized the reference in Eph 2:2 and the association with the ruling emperor," and that Jupiter-Zeus was believed to be the one who ordained human kings to rule.[52] Since Jesus Christ and Augustus were both honored as agents and viceroys of their respective deities, Paul's repeated explicatures honoring Christ as God's divine agent in Ephesians would activate his audience's memory and knowledge of Augustus, Jupiter-Zeus's viceroy widely publicized in the Empire, as the ad-hoc concept. Enrichment and disambiguation of the concept take place. In his audience's mind, God, the Father of Jesus Christ his Beloved and of all believers his adopted children (Eph 1:5–6), is contrasted against Jupiter-

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[48] Ibid., 216–18.

[49] Cooley, *Res Gestae*, 59.

[50] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 234.

[51] J. Rufus Fears, "The Cult of Jupiter and Roman Imperial Ideology," *ANRW* 17.1:3–141. Warren Carter establishes the importance and significance of being Jupiter's agent for the Caesars after Nero (*Matthew and Empire*, 26–29).

[52] Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 139; Fears, *ANRW* 68–71.

Zeus and Providence. The competitions pitched between God and Jupiter-Zeus/Providence and between Christ and Augustus could not have gone unnoticed because of the honorific genre Paul chose to adopt and strategically adapt for Ephesians and ostensibly introduced from 1:3–14 onwards.

Because of Paul's ostensive explicatures densely packed in 1:3–14 honoring God as the Supreme Benefactor and Jesus Christ as God's divine agent and viceroy through the repetitive ἐν and διὰ phrases, his audience would instinctively and effortlessly know that Ephesians is an honorific discourse and expect to see in and through the rest of it more honors bestowed upon God and Christ. Moreover, from the 1:3–14 onwards, Paul's choice to explicitly honor Christ's other benefactions, authority, and honorific roles and profile in close resemblances to the Caesars' would efficiently activate the Caesars' other honors and enable his audience to increasingly compare and contrast Christ's honors against the Caesars' in the Roman political-religious environment. As discussed in ch. 3, scholars have not recognized that Christ's role as God's human viceroy and divine agent is an honorific concept. As such, their treatments of 1:3–14 often focus only on it as a Jewish berakoth, an early Christian hymn, or a eulogy praising God for his blessings.[53] While 1:3–14 indeed matches the formula of a Jewish berakah, this association might only be efficient for a Jewish audience. For the majority Gentile listeners, it would require much more effort to access and process a berakah. However, given the ubiquity of the Caesars' role as the viceroy of Jupiter-Zeus, the honorific role of the Caesars would be more

[53] Barth, *Ephesians 1–3*, 97–101; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 10–19; Best, *Ephesians*, 104–15; Dahl, *Studies in Ephesians*, 279–334. It is beneficial to explore the functions of Jewish berakots in the intertestamental period to counter pagan eulogies and in consonant with political discourses. Due to time limitation, this would be an area for further research.

widely known by both Gentile and Jewish audiences and would thus be activated much more efficiently.

Founder of the Roman Empire

An inscription found in Pergamum records the honor bestowed upon Augustus: "Emperor Caesar, god Augustus, son of god. The People of Amisos and the fellow members of the corporate body of Romans honored their own savior and founder."[54] Augustus' role as the founder of the Roman Empire is undoubtedly certain and recorded in history. The subsequent emperors until Nero were directly related to Augustus as his adopted sons or from the same Julian family line. They carried on his dynasty and remained connected to him the founding father of the Empire. In this way, Augustus' reputation as founder endured through the first century. The peace and security brought about by Augustus ushered in the golden age of the Empire.

As such, Paul's proclamation that Christ is a "people founder" could efficiently activate the audience's knowledge of Augustus as founder of the Empire and initiates a comparison between the two. Christ's "people founder" concept triggered in 2:15b is enriched by the phrase "one new humanity" (ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον). The adjectives "one" (εἷς) and "new" (καινός) establishes the exclusiveness and newness of this humanity.[55] They emphasize that Paul is referring to a specific entity. In 2:11–22, this entity is founded by Christ (κτίζω) and comprised of two formerly separated groups, Gentiles and Jews, but made into one by Christ's reconciling

[54] Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 207.

[55] The two textual variants that change "new" (καινόν) to "common" (κοινόν) and "and only" (και μονον) are rejected because they are supported by only three witnesses at most and are mostly late witnesses, $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ F G for καινόν and K for και μονον. See also Best, *Ephesians*, 262.

and unifying work. It is new because the old paradigm that segregated the two had been destroyed and abolished. This new humanity is the exclusive political body called the church, the "assembly" (ἐκκλησία), and the citizens are fellow members of the "household of God" (οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ). Its exclusivity triggers an implicit trumping of the Roman Empire as the special people of Jupiter ruled by the Caesars. Thus, Christ's role as founder of the church efficiently activates Augustus' role as the founder of the Roman Empire while the exclusiveness and newness of the church as Christ's political body introduces a challenge between Christ as the Caesars. While scholars' common tendencies to interpret κτίζω as "create" adhere with the verb's broader nuance and usages in the NT and might not require more effort for processing, they could not explicate the enriching effect that the phrase ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον has upon the verb. As a result, the efficacious comparisons between Christ and the Caesars, and between the church and the Roman Empire could not be fully appreciated.

Peace of Caesar and peace-bringer

The peace of Caesar (pax Caesaris) was proclaimed through the *Res Gestae*, inscriptions, monuments like the *Ara Pacis*, coins, and by poets.[56] In *Res Gestae* 12.2–13, Augustus describes

[56] Klaus Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 2, 8–11. According to Wengst, "…the death of Jesus is indissolubly bound up with the political peace that there was at that time, the Pax Romana, produced and guaranteed by Roman power. In the view of the procurator this execution, like many others, was virtually an act to secure the peace. …[I]n the eyes of the Roman provincial administration Jesus was a rebel who endangered the existing peace. A disturber of the peace was done away with, by legal means, by the power responsible for peace. It follows from this that not only was Jesus' understanding of peace different, but above that all his activity cannot have conformed to the Pax Romana but must have been contrary to it" (2). Wengst further explains "Peace – that was the decisive and most important sign of this time. A modern historian (Hans-Georg Pflaum, "Das Römische Kaiserreich," *PWG* IV, Berlin [1963]: 317–428) sees the 'Pax Romana, peace in the empire and security on the frontiers', as 'perhaps the most amazing achievement of the Romans. Compared with all that the then world knew of its past, this state of affairs must have seemed to all those alive at the time to be the golden age.' … Rome…had presented itself as the bringer of peace even before the time of Augustus, so that there are already characteristics of the Pax Romana in the period before him; however, his time was felt to be the great turning point." (8). He adds, "The awareness of the dawn of a new time of peace was not limited to Augustus and the Roman senate; this feeling was also shared in the provinces. Two well-known inscriptions are indications of this. In the calendrical inscription of Priene, near to the provincial capital, Ephesus,

the dedication of the *Ara Pacis* and the closing of the doors of Janus Quirinus based on the Senate's decision after Augustus' victory over Antony.[57] The *Ara Pacis* depicts Augustus as the one designated to bring peace to the Roman Empire, as "a peaceful and not a military ruler, and, by ushering in an era of peace, to break the destructive cycle of history. He propagated a self-image of a Man *natus ad pacem*, born for peace."[58] This peace was gained at the costs of the bloodshed of thousands of soldiers and the loss of many more's lives both on land and at sea but was now claimed in the name of Augustus. The *Ara Pacis* monument, the annual sacrifices held in it, and the shutting of the doors of Janus Quirinus were common and constant propaganda of the Augustan Peace. An annual victory celebration, an *ovatio*, is described in Appian 5.130 in which Caesar is paraded as the one who "restored the peace on land and sea which had for so long been rent with discord."[59]

Not only are these symbolic monuments emphasized in the *Res Gestae*, they were also stamped on coins reaching to a wide extent of populace ensuring mass reception. Archaeological

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date 9 BC, Augustus is celebrated as the ruler given by providence, 'who has brought war to an end and has ordained peace': thus 'for the world, the birthday of the god (viz. the emperor Augustus)' means the beginning of his tidings of peace.' In an inscription from Halicarnassus, also in Asia Minor, …celebrates Augustus as 'saviour of the whole human race'" (8–9). Furthermore, "Aelius Aristides…chooses the perspective 'from above' in order to be able to perceive the splendor which emanates from Rome and thus gain an overall perspective (*Die Romrede des Aelius Aristides*, ed. Richard Klein [Darmstadt: 1983], 6). …also 'the altar of the peace of Augustus'… Seneca, *De Clementia* I.4" (9).

[57] Augustus, *Res Gestae* §12.2 and §13. Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 18. Augustus claimed, "When I returned to Rome from Spain and Gaul, having completed matters in those provinces so that they prospered, the Senate passed a resolution that an altar of the Augustan Peace should be dedicated by the field of Mars for my return, when Tiberius Nero and Publius Quintilius were consuls, ordering the magistrate, priests, and vestal virgins offer sacrifice on it for the anniversary." Also in §13, he wrote, "While I was princeps, the Senate ordered that the door of Janus Quintus, which our ancestors wanted to be shut when peace was attained by victories through the whole territory of the Roman people, on land and sea, be shut three times, though before I was born it was only recorded to have been shut twice during all the time since the foundation of the city."

[58] Podles, "Ara Pacis Augustae," 63.

[59] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 41.

artifacts of coins are found: (a) of the times emperors Nero and Domitian that bear the image and inscription of the *Ara Pacis*;[60] (b) of emperor Claudius' reign bearing the image of Pax with the words PACI AVGVSTAE;[61] and (c) of Nero's era with an image of the closed doors of the temple of Janus Quirinus and the inscription that reads "Peace on land and sea having been brought forth for the Roman people."[62] Based on these numismatic evidences, the message of the Augustan Peace secured by Augustus had clearly been repeatedly communicated by subsequent emperors, perpetuated down through the Julio-Claudian and Flavian dynasties, and continued to be a lasting reminder to Romans and inhabitants throughout the empire of the emperor as the personification and bringer of peace.

In powerful words that speak of an "impregnable peace," Horace in *Odes* 4.15 praises, "With Caesar as guardian of the world, there will be no wrath in government, no terror that drives out calm, no wrath that makes weapons and misery that threatens cities."[63] Ovid in his famous *Fasti* 1.709–722 describes the celebration and worship of the deified *Pax* as such (emphasis mine):

> The song now has brought us to the very altar of **Peace**.
> Its day will be the penultimate day of the month.
> Your ribboned hair crowned with laurels from Actium.
> O **Peace**, **be near** and stay gentle in the whole world.
> So now may there be no enemies and no occasion for victory parade;
> May you be for our princes a higher prize than war.

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[60] Torelli, *Roman Historical Relief*, Plates II.7 and II.8.

[61] Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 68–69. The Latin has: "TI[BERIVS] CLVD[IVS] CAESAR AVG[VSTVS] P[ONTIFEX] M[AXIMVS] TR[IBUNICIAE] P[OTESTAS] VIIII IMP XVI, or 'Tiberius Claudius, Caesar Augustus, Highest Priest, holding tribunician power for the ninth time, acclaimed as imperator for the 16th time."

[62] Torelli, *Roman Historical Relief*, Plate II.6; Kreitzer, *Striking New Images*, 118–19, 120–22; Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 76. The Latin words read "PACE P[opuli] R[omani] TERRA MARIQ[ue] PARTA IANVM CLVSIT."

[63] Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 46.

> Let the soldier only arm himself to restrain armed threats
> And let the war bugle be blown only in parade.
> Let those **nearby and far away** in the world dread Aeneas's scions
> And if some land fears Rome too little, let it love Rome instead.
> O priests, join incense to the peace-flames,
> And may a white sacrifice fall, pierced in the head,
> That this country, which guarantees **peace**, may endure in **peace**,
> Ask the favorable gods with devout prayers.[64]

Peace is also a divine virtue. In a set of six coins minted before 32 BC, on which three goddesses appear each on the reverse side of three coins matching three full-length figure portraits of Caesar on the other side, Peace is one of the three goddesses complementing Octavian addressing his troops before the battle in a pose of *adlocutio* and setting the aim of achieving peace in every battle.[65] With all these many evidences of peace closely associated with Augustus, we could agree with Harry O. Maier that "[t]he message of Roman peace and triumph was so ubiquitous and frequent that scholars have argued that it penetrated the very subconscious of the Roman world's inhabitants" and that "[w]e should not think that Christ followers were exempt from this."[66]

Paul's explicatures honoring Christ as Peace and peacemaker in Eph 2:14–17 would efficiently activate the peace of Caesar as a narrowed, disambiguated, and enriched ad-hoc concept because of their close similarities in words usages and the political ideologies. On one hand, Christ is honored as Peace and the peacemaker who destroyed the enmity, abolished the

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[64] Ibid., 47. The use of "nearby (probe)" and "far away (longe)" to indicate location of people who would experience this peace of Augustus is similar to that in Eph 2:13 in the Latin Vulgate (emphasis mine) "nunc autem in Christo Iesu vos qui aliquando eratis **longe** facti estis **prope** in sanguine Christi" and 2:17 "et veniens evangelizavit pacem vobis qui **longe** fuistis et pacem his qui **prope**." The use of "pax" in Eph 2:14 "ipse est enim **pax** nostra" sets up a direct comparison to the peace of Caesar.

[65] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 53–55.

[66] Harry O. Maier, "Colossians, Ephesians, and Empire," in *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament*, Resources for Biblical Study 84 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 185–202.

Law, and reconciled and united Jew and Gentile believers by his own sacrificial death on the cross.[67] On the other hand, Augustus was honored as the one who secured peace for the Romans by eliminating his political rivals through the sacrificial deaths of countless of soldiers. While the peace of Augustus led to temporary political stability in the Empire, the peace of Christ leads to the founding of a new humanity from two formerly politically estranged people groups that endures forever. The Roman political setting thus enables the activation of the peace of Augustus and its comparison with the peace of Christ, demonstrating it to be the relevant cognitive environment shared by these concepts.

Best rightly considers the *Pax Romana* and/or the Roman emperor as the possible ad-hoc concept(s) of the peace of Christ in Eph 2:14 but chooses the Jewish messianic expectation of peace from Isa 9:6 as its background instead.[68] If Best had examined 2:14a through the honorific lens, he might probably not think that Gentile converts reading it would be more familiar with "the cluster of new ideas [of peace] … from Judaism" than with the Roman political peace that had been ingrained in their minds all the time.[69] Indeed, regarding ποιῶν εἰρήνην in 2:15c, Best again describes the Roman peace as "a recognizable virtue … transferred to Jesus" but does/could not conclude that it is an efficient concept.[70] Thus, Best was close to identifying the

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[67] Best concludes, "The peace AE [Author of Ephesians] espouses is not established by force of arms nor maintained by careful diplomacy as was the *Pax Romana*; it comes from the weakness of a crucifixion carried out perhaps to maintain the *Pax Romana*" (*Ephesians*, 276).

[68] Best writes, "It was at this time an important concept in the Greco-Roman world following on the re-establishment of the *Pax Romana* after the quelling of the Jewish rebellion and the destruction of Jerusalem…, for Vespasian had revived the ideas of Augustus on peace. This might have suggested a link with Gentile-Jewish relations, and perhaps an implicit comparison of Christ to the emperor who was regarded as the creator and maintainer of peace" (ibid., 251).

[69] Ibid., 252.

[70] Ibid., 263.

more relevant ad-hoc concept for the peace of Christ explicatures in 2:14–15. However, without the honorific context and political-religious SCE of Ephesians that are now investigated and argued for, scholars like Best would persistently lack the *optimally relevant* genre and cognitive environment of the discourse to exegete its explicatures of Christ as honors and its implicit subversion of the Caesars.

Triumphantor

Paul's explicit honoring of Christ as a triumphantor victor in Eph 4:8b would efficiently trigger the Caesars' triumphantor role as its broadened ad-hoc concept. Praising Christ as a victorious conqueror in an honorific document is consistent with first-century military triumphs. Rulers and generals of armies such as the Caesars were often praised on inscriptions and with grand victory parades staged in honor of their triumphs.[71] In the minds of people subjugated by the Romans, the explicature and imagery of Christ leading a triumphant parade would impeccably trigger their memories of being in or attending similar Roman victory parades, or

[71] Augustus' *Res Gestae* is an example of such an inscription. Claudius also had an inscription etched onto an arch set up for his triumph over Britain. Mary Beard shows two drawings reproducing the final sections of the Roman Forum that inscribed lists of triumphs between 28–19 BCE and 29–21 BCE (*The Roman Triumph* [Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007], "Ch. 9 The Triumph of History," 303–304).

Lee L. Brice states, "The triumph was the height of military celebration and the highest honor to which a Roman commander could usually aspire. It was a military parade awarded in recognition of achievements in warfare. Only the Senate could confer a triumph, and although many laws were thought to govern the process, it seems that political competition played as much of a role in the grant. … The triumph may originally have been an ad hoc parade…. The triumphal commander, or *triumphantor*, would assemble a number of his troops, captives, booty, symbols, and banners in the Campus Martius. The parade (*pompa*) would then proceed through the city, entering at the triumphal gate and winding its way on a long path through much of the city to end at the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline hill" ("Triumph," in *Warfare in the Roman Republic: From the Etruscan Wars to the Battle of Actium*, ed. Lee L. Brice [Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014], 199–201).

Beard stresses the importance of the parade succinctly, "The obvious point is that the triumph and its captives amounted to a physical realization of empire and imperialism. As well as the image of Roman conflict with monarchy, the procession … instantiated the very idea of Roman territorial expansion, its conquest of the globe. The prisoners' exotic foreignness, at the heart of the imperial capital, put on show to the people watching the procession (or reading of it, or hearing tell of it, later) the most tangible expression you could wish of Rome's world power. It was a much better display of Roman success, … to have the enemy exhibited in the procession than killed on the field of battle" (*Roman Triumph*, "Ch. 4 Captives on Parade," 123).

seeing depictions of such parades in mimicry or representations.[72] Thus, Paul's audience would have easily related the concept of "leading captives a host of captives" to the triumphant processions of emperors and/or generals.[73]

Augustus' role as triumphantor is ostensibly depicted in *Res Gestae* 4. It recorded that Augustus was hailed as a victorious general twenty-one times. He won battles on land and at sea, and had nine kings and their children paraded before him in victory processions to whom he chose to show clemency (*Res Gestae* 3). His triumphs at sea became the subjects of the grand naval spectacles he sponsored and produced for the people's entertainment (*Res Gestae* 23). Through his land expeditions and conquests, he extended the territories of the Roman Empire (*Res Gestae* 26–27) and was famously credited for regaining the military standards back from Spain and Gaul (*Res Gestae* 29). Augustus' military triumphantor role was also portrayed on coins and statues.[74]

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[72] Kathleen M. Coleman describes, "The spectacle par excellence and, requiring the subjugation of a foreign enemy as its *raison d'être*, the least predictable, was the triumphal procession, in which the flora and fauna of the defeated region, and even personifications of topographical features, were flaunted alongside actual prisoners, whose dispatch marked the culmination of both the route and the display. If the surviving descriptions of these occasions have little veracity as an historical record…, they nevertheless provide compelling evidence for the power of the triumphal spectacle to rouse the Roman literary and artistic imagination…; and the fierce competition among Republican generals to earn a triumph, and the jealous abrogation of this privilege by the emperors, reflects the prestige to be earned by the deployment of large-scale spectacle even outside the circumscribed context of a military victory. Indeed, our focus on the competitive performance in the circus and the amphitheatre tends to eclipse the ritual significance of the procession that both initiated the even and constituted an integral part of the spectacle" ("Spectacle," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*, ed. Alessandro Barchiesi and Walter Scheidel [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010], 651–70).

Beard also stresses "the complex interrelationship between visual imagery, literary representations, and the procession as it took place on the streets" through many sculptures and friezes that lined the route of the parade (*Roman Triumph*, 125).

[73] Beard highlights placing captives in front of the victors, "[B]y whatever method the victims traveled, ancient writers are almost unanimous in identifying their place in the procession: *ante currum*, 'in front of the general's chariot.' … [T]his phrase … is repeated so often that it seems almost the standard term in ancient triumphal jargon—both in literary texts and inscriptions—for leading a victim 'in a triumphal procession'" (*Roman Triumph*, 125).

[74] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 53–55, 189–92; Levick, *Augustus: Image and Substance*, 255–57.

Tiberius was honored with a triumph while Augustus was still alive for his success in crushing the Illyrian revolt, at which he restored the temples of Concord and of Castor and Pollux, had two arches erected in Pannonia in his honor, and his generals received triumphal ornaments.[75] Claudius also achieved military victories. He successfully invaded Britain and celebrated his triumph greatly: "Arches were erected in Rome and Lugdunum. The victory was celebrated on coins, in sculpture (either depicting Claudius as a conquering divinity or showing a personification of defeated Britannia), and in the name of Claudius' son."[76] Claudius' triumph in conquering Britain was "the first celebrated by a ruling emperor since Augustus," with a grand procession, staging of "spectacles, along with extra horse races, beast hunts, athletic contests, and Pyrrhic dances performed by boys summoned from Asia," and "further lavish celebrations punctuated the rest of Claudius' reign, making the conquest of Britain the emperor's signal accomplishment."[77] Other festivals were also staged and epigrams written to re-present Claudius' victory.[78] The conquest was also commemorated on coins, monuments, sculptures, and a dedicatory inscription on an arch.[79] Compared to these Roman victory triumphs, the OT imagery

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[75] G. P. Baker, *Tiberius Caesar: Emperor of Rome* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001), 109, 125–26.

[76] Richard Alston, *Aspects of Roman History, 31 BC–AD 117*, 2nd ed., Aspects of Classical Civilisation (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 157.

[77] Josiah Osgood, *Claudius Caesar: Image and Power in the Early Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), "Ch. 4 Subduing the Ocean," 92.

[78] Ibid., 92, 102. This includes an epigram "*Praise of Caesar*, arguably written for performance in conjunction with the triumph itself" (102).

[79] Ibid., 93–97, 104–6. Osgood shows picture of a fragment of the inscription (95). The English translation of the inscription as "proposed by Alföldy at *CIL* 6.40416" reads, "For Tiberius Claudius Caesar, Augustus Gemanicus, son of Drusus, pontifex maximus, with tribunician power for the eleventh time, consul for the fifth time, *imperator* for the twenty-second time, censor, father of the fatherland, the Senate and People of Rome, because he conquered 11 kings of Britain in a few days without any loss and he was the first to bring the kingdoms and barbarian peoples beyond the Ocean under the rule of the Roman people" (105–6).

of God's victory over his enemies in Ps 68:18 might pale as a less efficient ad-hoc concept, since it would require more efforts from a Gentile audience potentially less knowledgeable of the Hebrew Scripture and the various Jewish concepts to access the psalm's OT background before associating it to Christ to derive the same effect.[80]

In addition, the honorific aspects of Christ emphasized in Eph 4:8 are synonymous with how the emperor was represented in an actual military parade. First, the emperor would mount on the victor's chariot, setting him on a higher plane than the rest of the procession and the spectators. An important cultic association between him and Jupiter was also conveyed, "the victorious commander impersonated the god Jupiter Opitmus Maximus himself, and that for his triumph he became … 'god for a day.'"[81] More significantly, the triumphant parade climaxed with the emperor's "ascent of the Capitoline hill up to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus" to offer sacrifices to Jupiter.[82] Claudius reportedly "ascended the steps of the Temple of Jupiter Greatest and Best on his knees."[83] Thus, Paul's explicature of Christ's ascent to a high and exalted position of authority and leading captives a host of captives in 4:8a–b matched the

[80] See Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 242–43; Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 56–76; Harris, *Descent of Christ*, 64–104 for the related Jewish concepts one would need to examine for relevance. I acknowledge the possibility that some Gentile believers could be familiar with OT/Jewish concepts. However, we do not know how well they were familiar or how many of them. As for the relevance in efficiency and efficacy of the OT compared to the Greco-Roman political-religious environment, this will be addressed to some extent in ch. 5.

[81] Beard, *Roman Triumph*, "Ch. 7 Playing God," 226. Beard concludes, "The key fact … is the powerful connection in the late Republic and early Empire between triumphal and divine glory. In various forms and media, the extraordinary public honor granted to the general in a triumph—like other honors at this period—was represented, contested, and debated in divine terms" (ibid., 238).

[82] Beard, *Roman Triumph*, 249.

[83] Osgood, *Claudius Caesar*, 92. Beard also states, "Julius Caesar is reputed to have 'climbed the stairs on the Capitol on his knees' in a gesture of humility that was apparently later copied by the emperor Claudius" (*Roman Triumph*, 249).

emperor's high authority and position on the chariot as a triumphantor acting as a god and his final ascent to the Temple of Jupiter.

Second, the emperor would reward and decorate his generals and troops with gifts for his victory that they participated in, albeit they were the ones who secured it for him. This could be an incentive for them to be present at the procession or more likely to secure their votes for him and to fight for him in future.[84] Christ's giving of ministers as gifts to humankind is thus a disambiguated concept because his gifts are 1) not to enhance his beneficiaries' own wealth but to serve the greater good of the church his political body; and 2) could never be tools for extortion or defamation against him like what Roman soldiers could do to the emperor because Christ is already honored with the greatest authority and position on the right hand of God.[85] Thus, the Caesars' war triumphs and role as triumphantor are efficient ad-hoc concepts for the audience's processing of Christ's triumph over his enemies. They serve to legitimize the Caesars' political power, demonstrating that the Roman political context is a relevant cognitive environment for Eph 4:8.

Generous Giving of Monetary Gifts and Lands

The *Res Gestae* casts Augustus as a political ruler who generously gives monetary gifts to his people. To more than 300,000 veterans who fought for him, Augustus gave lands and cash (*Res Gestae* 3.3). He gave free monetary gifts of 60–100 denarii to 200,000–330,000 people of

[84] Beard, *Roman Triumph*, 242–43; Adrian Keith Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War: 100 BC–AD 200*, Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 167.

[85] Beard describes the disadvantages of the donatives that generals and emperors gave, "Donatives could … backfire. … [D]isgruntled troops could always attempt to wreck their commander's aspirations or at least spoil his show. Pompey's first triumph was almost ruined by the solders who threatened to mutiny or help themselves to the booty on display, if they were not given a bigger bonus" (*Roman Triumph*, 243).

the Roman Empire each time on six different consulships and gifts of 250 denarii to 120,000 colonial soldiers, altogether totaling to an astounding 155.55 million denarii (*Res Gestae* 15). He paid a total of 215 million denarii for lands to be given to soldiers and nearly 100 million in gratuity to discharged soldiers (*Res Gestae* 16). He consistently supplemented the state and military treasury with his own money, amounting to more than 80 million denarii (*Res Gestae* 17–18). The biographer Suetonius also wrote of how much Augustus gave away: "For the Roman people he bequeathed 40,000,000 sesterces; for the tribes, 3,500,000; for the praetorian guards, 1,000 each; for the city watchmen, 500; and to soldiers in the legions, 300."[86] "He made other outlays to a variety of persons, some as big as 20,000 sesterces, and these were set up to be granted in one year."[87] This would set the tone and the expectation on future emperors to be rulers who would give gifts to the people of the empire.[88] Tiberius gave a banquet with a thousand tables and three hundred sesterces to every soldier who fought in the Illyrian and German wars.[89] Claudius too gave lavishly a total of more than 45 million sesterces after his triumph over Britain.[90]

J. R. Harrison accurately identifies that "Paul's emphasis on the 'gift' of divine grace in Ephesians (Eph 3:7 …; 4:7 …) resonates with the emphasis on imperial 'gift-giving'" and that

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[86] Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*, "Divine Augustus" §101.2, in Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 40.

[87] Suetonius, *Twelve Caesars*, §101.3, in Ibid.

[88] J. R. Harrison writes, "Augustus had become the iconic example of beneficence in the estimation of his contemporaries and successors" ("The 'Grace' of Augustus Paves a Street at Ephesus," in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity. Vol. 10: A Review of the Greek and Other Inscriptions and Papyri Published Between 1988 and 1992*, ed. S. R. Llewelyn, James R. Harrison, and E. J. Bridge [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012], 59–63).

[89] Baker, *Tiberius Caesar*, 126.

[90] Osgood, *Claudius Caesar*, 92.

"[t]he diversity of gifting in the 'body of Christ' (Eph 4:7–16), founded on the beneficence of its ascended Lord (4:7b …), stood in contrast to the uniformity of the Nero's 'body of state' (Seneca, *Clem*. 1.4.1–1.5.2)."[91] Three factors make the Caesars' extravagant givings a more efficient and efficacious concept relevant to Jesus Christ's givings of gifts (Eph 4:7, 8c, 11) and of his own life on the cross (2:15; 5:2, 25) than Ps 67. First, giving gifts was a common benefaction in the first century and these two great benefactors exemplified that. One benefactor's gift would quite certainly activate another's and inevitably result in comparison. Second, the similar extravagance in Christ's and the Caesars' givings and of the gifts they gave enrich the concept. Third, based on the same reasons that OT imagery of divine victory in Ps 68:18 being presumably less efficient for Eph 4:8b, the concept of "God receiving gifts from men" in Ps 67:19b LXX is also less efficient for Eph 4:8c. Apart from being less knowledgeable of the Hebrew Scriptures, the audience might also not be aware of the difference of person references in the verb λαμβάνω between Eph 4:8 and Ps 67:19 LXX, and thus not anticipate their significance.

The differences between Christ's gifts and the Caesars' gifts also enrich comparison of their givings by disambiguation. Augustus' (and subsequent Caesars') gifts of money and lands are tangible rewards focused upon gaining the loyalty of citizens and soldiers to support the Caesars in power and increased their personal wealth. Christ's gifts on the other hand are less tangible and require receivers to exercise them for the overall benefit and growth of the church,

[91] Harrison, "'Grace' of Augustus," 61, 62–63. He writes, "The imperial ideology of beneficence…would have been the immediate backdrop against which the Gentile Ephesian auditors first heard and assessed the nature and scope of the divine χάρις that Paul had announced in his preaching the gospel" (60) and "[s]everal of Paul's 'grace' texts in Ephesians reflect an imperial benefaction background, employing the Augustan motif of 'surpassing' wealth. … Indeed, 'wealth' terminology is a continual refrain throughout Ephesians" (61).

not for individual indulgence. Furthermore, Christ gave himself extravagantly and became the ultimate gift to secure the eternal salvation of all people, a gift to which no amounts of monetary gifts or lands from Augustus could compare. The efficiency and efficacy of activating the Caesars' gifts giving as relevant ad-hoc concepts of Christ's givings in Ephesians demonstrate the relevance of the political environment as the SCE. This work agrees with Harrison's assertion, "In sum, the imperial context of Paul's language of 'grace' in Ephesians has to be reckoned with," and attests that "Paul is implicitly drawing a comparison between the benefits of Christ and the munificence of the Roman ruler."[92]

Builders of Public and Sacred Infrastructures

According to *Res Gestae* 19–21, Augustus conducted a series of building projects including (1) temples to pagan gods like Apollo, Julius, Pan, Zeus, Quirinus, Athena, Cronos, Ares, and Jupiter; (2) state buildings like the senate house, the Capitolium, theatre of Pompey, the Julian forum and basilica; and (3) public constructions like water aqueducts and bridges. He repaired and built up to eighty-two physical temples in the city. His benefaction of piety included reinstating temple dedications plundered from temples all over Asia by his enemies and converting eighty statues of him into dedications in the temple of Apollo (*Res Gestae* 24). Temples were common sights in the Roman Empire. Many were imperial cult temples as mentioned at the beginning of this section. However, despite the plethora of temples and shrines and all forms of pagan gods they worshipped including the emperors, the Gentiles were ironically described as godless and without hope (2:12).

[92] Ibid., 62.

An inscription in Latin and Greek recounts Augustus' grace in building a road at Ephesus and ensured that everyone using it would appreciate his kind benevolent gift.[93] Another inscription on an arch over Via Flamina in Arminum identifies Augustus as the sponsor of its repair.[94] Tiberius was also honored for his benefactions of giving and building infrastructures. An inscription on the based of a statue at a bath and gymnasium in Sardis records Tiberius as the one who had "released imperial funds for this structure to be rebuilt, after the city sustained considerable damage in an earthquake of 17 CE."[95] Claudius sponsored repairs for a road near Feltria and the relocation of aqueducts at his own expense.[96] Suetonius in *Claudius* §21.1 also recounts Claudius donated food to people and rebuilt Pompey's theater damaged by fire for holding secular games. An inscription records Nero ordered constructions of inns and resthouses along the military highways of Thrace.[97] Subsequent Caesars continued to show acts of benefaction in building public roads and infrastructures.[98]

Based on this mass of evidence honoring the Caesars, Paul's explicatures honoring Christ as the founder of a new humanity and as the keystone of the church that is growing beyond physical and political borders into a holy temple and a dwelling of the one God (2:15–22) would

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[93] Ibid., 59–63.

[94] Sherk, *Roman Empire*, §6, 10–11.

[95] Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 57. The words of the inscription in Greek and English can be found in Llewelyn, *New Documents 9*, §10, 22.

[96] Sherk, *Roman Empire*, §53, 96; §59, 100.

[97] Ibid., §66, 106–7.

[98] Vespasian sponsored the construction of a channel and bridges in Syria and ordered the restoration of public land at Pompeii (ibid., §85a, 129; §91, 132). Titus repaired damages caused by an earthquake (ibid., §93, 135). An inscription from Ionia near Smyrna identifies Domitian as the sponsor for a road (Llewelyn, *New Documents 9*, §11, 23–26).

efficiently trigger the broader concepts of the Caesars as sponsors and builders of public infrastructures and sacred temples in the Empire. Paul's descriptions encroach upon the sacred spatiality that his audience in the first century would be familiar with. At the same time, the temple that Christ builds is disambiguated from the infrastructures and temples that the Caesars were credited for building. The relevance in efficiency of these concepts is optimized in the Roman political-religious environment of the first century.

Commentators rightly associate Paul's explicatures in 2:15–22 as referring to the church. However, few observe the relevance of the temples built by and for the Caesars as ad-hoc concepts for the phrase "a holy temple in the Lord" (ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, 2:21). The temple in Jerusalem could be a reference based on expectations of it as a universal temple according to OT prophecy in Isa 56:6–7.[99] This could be possible since it was the only temple of the Jews and was unique from all the imperial cult temples. However, it is considerably less efficient compared to the imperial temples since one would have to know the OT prophecy in Isaiah in order to associate the Jerusalem temple to the prophecy before assigning the reference of the temple to the church. Conversely, the use of ναός to refer to pagan temples such as those of Artemis or of the emperor cults would be a more efficient ad-hoc concept.[100]

[99] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 156–57; Best, *Ephesians*, 287–88; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 410.

[100] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 410.

Authority over all

An important relief that vividly depicts the authoritative position of Augustus is the *Gemma Augustea*.[101] On this cameo, Augustus is seated next to Roma on the upper half, signifying that they are the only ones in ruling power. However, Augustus is clearly in the center of focus with all the faces and gazes of the characters (personifications of other gods and princes) converging on him. He holds the *lituus* as a symbol of "military high command."[102] He "is enthroned as Jupiter being crowned by *Oikoumene* 'the inhabited world,'" while on the lower half of the relief beneath his feet "is a scene of humiliating conquest of defeated foes."[103] In this relief, "Augustus's supreme and all-encompassing rule" is "expressed in immediate, visual terms," paving the way for future Caesars to continue this claim "under the auspices of Augustus," beginning with Tiberius.[104] Thus, the vivid portrayal of Augustus in the very center of the *Gemma Augustea* describes his positional authority and conquest over all people. In a different cameo, perhaps before becoming emperor depicting his victory at Actium, Augustus is pictured as a triumphantor riding on a chariot over a sinking enemy, presumably Sextus Pompey or Antony, and holding on to a trident like Neptune.[105] In the annual victory parade described in Appian 5.130, Augustus would be dressed as Jupiter leading captives of people ahead of him in the re-enactment of his triumphs. Similarly, as shown in the earlier section on "Triumphantor"

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[101] Taylor, *Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, 226–27; Kreitzer, *Striking New Images*, 77–78; Koortbojian, *Divinization of Caesar and Augustus*, 151–52; Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 141; Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 182.

[102] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 231, Fig. 182. For the *lituus* and its symbolism, see also Koortbojian, *Divinization of Caesar and Augustus*, 63–73.

[103] Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 141.

[104] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 230.

[105] Ibid., 97.

(see p. 191), Tiberius and Claudius were also honored in similar triumphs, acted as Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and ascended up to the Capitoline hill.

Another cameo called the *The Grand Camée* or the "Great Cameo of France" bears a close resemblance to the *Gemma Augustea*. Tiberius sits in the very center holding a staff with his mother Livia by his side. In the upper tier the deceased and apotheosized Augustus appears with Drusus Julius Caesar, Tiberius' son, and with a representation likely that of Alexander the Great. In the middle, the world of the living, a figure in military gear, possibly Germanicus, stands before Tiberius to be commissioned, while Agrippina stands behind him and young Gaius to the far left. In the lower tier beneath Tiberius' feet are captives likely from Parthia and Germany.[106] The ostensive references to Tiberius' authority and position of power are unmistakable and their goals are clear: "to assert the dynastic continuity and legitimacy of the Julio-Claudian emperors of the Roman Empire."[107] Another cameo shows Caligula with cornucopia seated next to Roma with a *lituus* in his hand, depicting his enthronement.[108]

These vivid displays of the Caesars' authority and position in these reliefs and triumphant parades are strikingly similar to Paul's descriptions of Christ's position and authority in Eph 1:20–23 and 4:8–10. As a result of these similarities, the concept of Christ's supreme position of authority in Ephesians would activate the broader concepts of the Caesars' position and authority

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[106] John Ferguson, *The Religions of the Roman Empire*, Aspects of Greek and Roman Life (1970; repr., Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 118; Kreitzer, *Striking New Images*, 77–78; Koortbojian, *Divinization of Caesar and Augustus*, 152; "Great Cameo of France," *World Digital Library*, https://www.wdl.org/en/item/683/.

[107] "Great Cameo of France."

[108] Wikimedia Commons contributors, "File: Caligula Und Roma Kameo KHM IXa 59 (Black Background).Jpg," *Wikimedia Commons, the Free Media Repository*, July 25, 2017, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Caligula_und_Roma_Kameo_KHM_IXa_59_(black_background).jpg&oldid=124904493; Long, *In Step with God's Word*, 210.

in relation to Jupiter and above the people they had subjugated. The political and religious natures of these concepts demonstrate the relevance of the Roman political-religious environment as the SCE for interpreting the honors of Christ and the Caesars.

Commentators commonly identify the phrase *πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ* in Eph 1:22a as a quotation of the phrase πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ in Ps 8:6 (or an allusion to 110:1),[109] after all the six words in both verses are either identical or of similar senses. However, as with the use of Ps 68:18 in Eph 4:8, Paul altered some of the words to suit his purpose at this junction. The person reference of the verb ὑποτάσσω is changed from second-person to third-person and the preposition ὑποκάτω is changed to *ὑπὸ*. In this way, the portrayal of Christ's position and authority over four different aspects in 1:20–23 flows seamlessly such as to strike a close similarity with the Caesars' positional authority with deities and over subjugated peoples. The reference to Ps 8:6 might only be ostensive to a Jewish audience but would remained subtle or even unnoticed by Gentile readers who were more aware of the powers that the Caesars wield than the Hebrew Scriptures.

Head

Before the writing of Ephesians, "head" is used as a political metaphor to describe Nero in relation to Rome. This is clearly evidenced in Seneca's *De Clementia*. In I.4.3, Seneca states: "For while Caesar needs power, the state also needs a head [*caput*]," while in I.3.5 he reminded emperor Nero that he was the "soul" of the state and that Rome was his body. Seneca's descriptions of Nero as the "head" is in reference to Nero's position of political power in the

[109] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 65–66; Best, *Ephesians*, 180–81; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 282–83.

empire and the "body" in reference to Rome being the state ruled by the emperor.[110] Moreover, since Seneca's work was completed in 55 AD during the rule of Nero, it is probable that the Ephesians audience would have learned about it such that Paul's use of "head" in Eph 1:22b; 4:15b; 5:23b to refer to Christ's headship would activate the Caesars' headship in its Roman imperial reference and significance as a relevant and disambiguated ad-hoc concept.

As discussed in the subsection "Headship" on p. 129, Christ's headship over the church (1:20–23) is an honorific concept of his authority. It is disambiguated from the Caesars' headship over the Roman Empire in a number of ways. First, Christ's headship over the church, his body, is not lording over her (1:22b; 4:15b) while the Caesars' headship was for greater control over the Empire.[111] Second, Christ's headship originated from love and self-sacrifice (5:23b) while the Caesars' was based on showing clemency and leniency for the sake of popularity.[112] Third, Christ's headship enables direct access to the Father (2:18) while the Caesars' headship garnered for greater support for their political positions:

> Values of loyalty and allegiance were important to Romans and especially to the imperial regime. … [T]he Roman people were consistently exposed to information that reminded people of the great deeds of Rome and the benefits that those within its borders enjoyed. Within this context, the emperor himself was portrayed in various ways that communicated his role as the head of this great empire.[113]

Thus, the Caesars' headship concept is activated efficiently and efficaciously for Paul's audience. Considerations of whether the use of "head" could be associated with the Hebrew ראש or whether it means source/origin, authority, or preeminence in the pericopes it is found may

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[110] Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues."

[111] Best, *Ephesians*, 182, 408. Seneca, *De Clementia* I.4.3.

[112] Best, *Ephesians*, 535. Seneca, *De Clementia* I.5.6–7.

[113] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 234.

seem useful.[114] However, the former entail more processing effort while the latter could be a combination of available options. The Caesar's headship is a available as an efficient ad-hoc concept and affirms the relevance of a political environment.

Thus, the Caesars' honorific concepts proclaim their honors as great political benefactors of the Roman Empire. They are efficiently activated by Paul's explicatures honoring Jesus Christ. While the above political concepts and the political environment is found to be relevant for the honors of Christ, the Caesars were also given divine honors that are activated as ad-hoc concepts demonstrating the relevance of a religious environment.

The Caesars received Divine Honors

Benefactors in the first century normally expected to receive appropriate recognitions for the benefactions they brought to the city; and the benefitting cities were expected to give them due honor in order to testify they had fulfilled their responsibilities to the deserving benefactors.[115] Evidences shown thus far demonstrate that the Caesars received honors given by the Senate and provincial governors and elites, recognizing them as political benefactors. Of equal if not greater significance, the Caesars also received divine honors.

Based on the aforementioned overwhelming catalogue of imperial temples and shrines dedicated to the worship of the emperor, Price has established, "The imperial cult, along with

[114] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 69; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 285–86.

[115] Winter describes, "This obligation was not seen simply as a cultural convention, but some saw it as 'a law'. Benefactions could be called 'loans' which were repaid with gratitude, and they should be reclaimed with monetary compensation if not properly acknowledged. Such was the expectation of the benefactor that due recognition would be given in the appropriate way. Others saw failure to acknowledge public works adequately as a sin" ("Public Honouring," 90–91).

politics and diplomacy, constructed the reality of the Roman empire."[116] An impressive statue of Claudius features him distinctively like Jupiter, being partially nude as a sign of heroism or divinity, holding on to a scepter suggesting Jupiter's divine rule, and with the eagle of Jupiter standing on his right looking up at him.[117] Stephen Mitchell concludes, "The diffusion of the cult of Augustus and of other members of his family in Asia Minor and throughout the Greek East from the beginning of the empire was rapid, indeed almost instantaneous."[118]

Within the imperial cult, the Caesars also become the unifier of empire. James B. Rives attests, "The most universal objects of cult in the Roman Empire were in fact the emperors and their families. More than anything else, it was the figure of the emperors that united all the diverse peoples and traditions of the empire."[119] To exhort Nero to be an emperor of clemency, Seneca describes him,

> Stable and well-founded greatness belongs only to the man who all others know is for them as much as he is above them, whom they daily find to be anxiously on guard for their well-being, individually and collectively. When that man appears, people don't scatter…; they compete in flocking to him as though to a brilliant, beneficent star. For that man's sake, people are utterly prepared to hurl themselves onto the swords of would-be assassins and to lay down their lives if his path to safety must be paved with their corpses …. It is not without reason that peoples and cities have entered into this agreement, to love and protect their kings in this way and to sacrifice their lives and property however the ruler's safety requires. No, nor does it mean that they are mad, or place little value on their own lives, when so many thousands take up arms on a single

[116] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 248.

[117] James B. Rives, *Religion in the Roman Empire*, Blackwell Ancient Religions (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 153–54.

[118] Stephen Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 100. So does Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 262–63.

[119] Rives, *Religion in the Roman Empire*, 141.

> person's behalf, and at the cost of many deaths save the life of one man who is sometimes old and weak.[120]

Although Seneca's styles his writing as a *panegyric*, i.e. "what appears to be simple, laudatory description is a cover for moral exhortation" and could thus stir suspicions of its truthfulness,[121] one cannot deny the office of the Caesars did unite the Roman people and could in itself be an ad-hoc concept relevant to Christ's benefaction of reconciling/uniting Gentiles and Jews. The divination of the Caesars created an even greater unifying factor upon the people. Winter stresses that the pervasiveness of the imperial cult created

> intense social pressure … on all provincials and Roman citizens residing in the East to reciprocate with appropriate divine honours to and for emperors in their temples because of the enormous benefits and other blessings brought by the *pax romana* socially, economically and politically. Performing cult acts before statues of living emperors, and at times members of their family, on the numerous official high and holy days in the city's annual calendar was considered the only appropriate expression of loyalty.[122]

Such pressure to participate in imperial cultic activities and emperor worship throughout the Empire is evidenced from official inscriptions and decrees that either promised or required honor and sacrifices to be made to the deified Caesars.[123] Worshipping the living emperors became an institutionalized phenomenon.[124] Although the Caesars occasionally rejected proposals from

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[120] Seneca, *De Clementia* I.3.3–4. English translation taken from Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Anger, Mercy, Revenge*, trans. Robert A. Kaster, The Complete Works of Lucius Annaeus Seneca (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 149.

[121] Ibid., 134.

[122] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 2. Rives states two main practices that led to such widespread influence: "The first is the inclusion in the calendar of an increasing number of imperial anniversaries: the emperor's birthday, the anniversaries of his ascension and major military victories, and other notable occasions. These were marked by public sacrifices and celebrations, just like the festival days of traditional deities. The second practice is the formal deification of deceased emperors" (*Religion in the Roman Empire*, 149).

[123] Sherk, *Roman Empire*, §7, 11–16; §32, 57–59.

[124] Michael Koortbojian suggests that honoring benefactors in the likeness of gods before the imperial era were more likely "private acts, engaged in the private sphere, without the slightest hint of *official*, that is, state,

provincial elites to build imperial cult temples in their honor,[125] it is likely that they did so either as "a matter of diplomatic protocol" or as calculated political maneuvers, masked as acts of honor.[126] Nevertheless, provincial cities continued to build new temples to the Caesars as expressions of allegiance and fidelity to them and their rule.[127] Winter concludes,

> In the light of … the 'refusal' of divine honours and temples, and … the widespread use of divine titles of the Julio-Claudian emperors, it certainly was not the case that imperial cultic activities lay dormant in any of their regions. Almost all sources … are official

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authority," and "that no *pattern* for such acts of worship was observed, … no fixed practices for such exalted honors had been established" (*Divinization of Caesar and Augustus*, 3).

[125] Augustus was the first emperor to turn down the position of *pontifex maximus* (*Res Gestae* 10). He also rejected the senate's vote to bestow on him more military triumphs than those he was personally involved (*Res Gestae* 4) and refused to accept complete power offered to him by the people and senate during four different consulships (*Res Gestae* 5–6). Tiberius too rejected offers to build temples because he claimed they were "only for the gods." Similarly, Claudius "refused honours on his accession," as did Nero (Winter, *Divine Honours*, 78, 89). See also Sherk, *Roman Empire*, §31, 57; §44, 85; §62, 103; Gradel, *Emperor Worship*, 59.

[126] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 78, 89–92. Winter highlights that Tiberius' refusal of a divine honor (*Annals* 4.38) has to be filtered through 1) a former instance when he approved an imperial temple to be built to him in which he justified his action as following Augustus' example (*Annals* 4.37); and 2) a later epigraphic evidence (*SEG* 11.923) stating Tiberius ordered three statutes of Augustus, Julia Augusta, and himself to be set in the temple to which incense and sacrifices were to be offered (ibid., 79–81). Further evidences of the existence of the imperial cult of Tiberius and that honored Tiberius as god more than sufficiently outweigh his refusals of divine honor in *SIG*^{3} 718.I; *OGIS* 583; and *SEG* 18.578 (ibid., 81–87).

Gradel highlights, "Honours were a way to define the status or social position of the person or god honoured, but it was also a way to tie him down. The bestowal of honours to someone socially superior, whether man or god, obliged him to return them with benefactions. Or, we might say, to rule well" (*Emperor Worship*, 59). Fantin also proposes, "Granting honours also implied a response. If one did not wish to accept the responsibility associated with the honour, it was rejected. This probably accounts for some of the rejection of honours by various emperors" (*Lord of the Entire World*, 138). One could speculate that the Caesars rejected some divine honors in order to be seen as humble rulers of arête, since "[i]t could indeed be honourable to reject excessive honours" (Gradel, *Emperor Worship*, 59).

[127] Winter states, "New emperors customarily declined divine honours for two different audiences, i.e., that of Rome and those from the cities in the East who made this offer. … How the coded diplomatic statement of refusing divine honours was interpreted cannot be known in every instance. … The evidence cited indicates that this refusal was not taken at face value. In fact extant evidence points to a subsequent 'disregarding' of the imperial response" (*Divine Honours*, 91). Duncan Fishwick also states, "[T]he notion of paying cult to the future emperor is already well attested under Augustus and his immediate successors. The basic point implicit in this development is that the dynasty as a whole was of such importance that by a natural process the future emperor(s) came to be linked with the reigning in religious observances. Despite Julio-Claudian 'refusals' of divine honours for the emperor himself, this was a welcome extension of the ruler cult which official policy could afford to leave unchecked" (*The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire*, vol. I.2 [Leiden: E J Brill, 1987], 330).

> ones, i.e., officially sanctioned inscriptions, plinths of statues and legal currency, and thus provide evidence of imperial endorsement of cultic veneration as a sign of loyalty.[128]

The rest of this section discusses four divine titles used of the Caesars in the first century that are also used of Jesus Christ in Ephesians.[129]

As Son of God

Upon the death and deification of Julius Caesar, Octavian assumed with ease the title of "son of God," evidenced by coins that depict the faces of Julius Caesar and himself bearing the title "*Divi filius*."[130] He was the appointed heir by adoption and successor to Caesar. Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero as the adopted sons of their previous emperors also took on the divine title following the apotheoses of their predecessors. Adoption was not uncommon in the first century era, and adopted sons "were pivotal and often favored; they stabilized ruling families and formed a key part of imperial ideology."[131] It was a critical topic of political interest of that time.[132] This custom and its importance in the succession of powers in the imperial family would have been a concept easily triggered by Paul's use of υἱοθεσία in Eph 1:5.

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[128] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 92.

[129] Ibid., 61.

[130] Levick, *Augustus: Image and Substance*, 30–31.

[131] Peppard, *Son of God*, 30. Peppard states, "…in the first century, begetting and making sons was not primarily a philosophical distinction. On the contrary, the father-son relationship was the center of all Roman social relationships–the crux of Roman politics and kinship. … In the Roman worldview, sonship did not point primarily backward to begetting, but forward to inheritance, often through the medium of adoption."

[132] Ibid., 47. Peppard states "…the evidence suggests that the begetting and making of imperial sons was charted quite carefully by residents of the Empire, especially during the Julio-Claudian 'dynasty.' People took note of who was born and adopted in the imperial family. Furthermore, a helpful inscription noting Nero's divine sonship comes from the time *after* his adoption by Claudius but *before* his accession to imperial power (between 50-54 C.E.), thus showing that the 'son of God' title was connected more to his adoption than to his rule."

Contrary to Lincoln regarding the Paul's use of "Son of God" in Eph 4:13,[133] this research views its single appearance in Ephesians as an ostensive stimulus that triggers a comparative note with the same title referring to the Roman emperor. Winter lists many evidences in official records, decrees and inscriptions in which this title clearly referred to the Roman emperor.[134] "Only of Nero … has evidence been located of the use of the article 'the' (ὁ) with reference to himself as 'the son of a god'," [135] a construction mentioned earlier that emphatically refers to Jesus Christ in the NT. Michael Peppard's significant work on the ideology of divine sonship in the social and political context of the Roman world establishes,

> The only titular use of "son of God" in the New Testament era, outside of the New Testament itself, was for the Roman emperor, who was *divi filius* in Latin and θεοῦ υἱός in Greek. … Besides its application to the emperor, the term "son of God" was almost nonexistent in Latin and Greek because gods typically have names. Someone might be called "son of Zeus" or "son of Hercules" to express an affiliation to one of those gods. But the plain "son of God" was used for the emperor and, of course, for Jesus Christ. [His] argument thus emphasizes the Empire-wide recognition of the emperor as "son of God," a fact which makes imperial divine sonship a relevant, though neglected, historical *comparandum* for divine sonship in early Christianity.[136]

This "son of God" title, this "mantle of divine sonship… laid upon each *princeps*,"[137] in effect marks the evolution of emperor worship and not simply the emperor's apotheosis—deification

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[133] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 256. He cautions that "too much should not be read into this" and that it is unlikely "there were divergent views about Christ's divine sonship troubling his readers." It is undoubtedly a Christological title (ibid.; Best, *Ephesians*, 400–401; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 553–54; Larkin, *Ephesians*, 80).

[134] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 67–69.

[135] Ibid., 67.

[136] Peppard, *Son of God*, 28–29.

[137] Ibid., 30, 47. He writes "a helpful inscription noting Nero's divine sonship comes from the time *after* his adoption by Claudius but *before* his accession to imperial power (between 50-54 C.E.), thus showing that the 'son of God' title was connected more to his adoption than to his rule" (47).

after death. Based on new material evidences and discoveries of ritual practices by scholars,[138] a new perspective emerges that the worship of the emperor was: (1) "widespread geographically and over time;" (2) "arose substantially from local initiatives by subjects negotiating complex systems of power;" (3) of "diverse local manifestation, but with enough resemblances to cohere;" and (4) of a "living emperor."[139] Superseding proposals of an earlier generation based mainly upon "philosophical and intellectual opinions about the gods,"[140] Peppard argues that the divinity of the emperor "was not an essence but a status—a status honored because of powerful benefactions," and that it "exists along a cosmic gradient or spectrum" such that no "world-wide distance" separates divinity and humanity.[141] "Rome … exported to the provinces the 'god of the Romans,' the deity of 'Roman religion,' namely the emperor. … Augustus … revealed his divine nature to the whole world at once, and thus endowed the Roman empire with its only universally shared deity," claims Clifford Ando.[142]

These findings establish the case that the living emperor was worshipped as god and human, and warrant the fact that in the cognitive knowledge of the majority of the Roman

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[138] Ibid., 31–49. For example: "Fergus Millar propounded the study of material artifacts and records of ritual practices, evidence of what Romans *did* with respect to the gods: temples, priesthoods, inscriptions, papyri, milestones, amulets, jewelry, oaths, sacrifices, libations, hymns, pilgrimages" (33); "[Ittai] Gradel's methodological commitments to material evidence, ritual practices, and the interpretation of Roman religion with a scale of divinity allow him to situate the worship of the emperor within the normal functioning of Roman religious practice" (36); "material evidences of temples, sacrifices, and priesthoods" (39); "…θεός was applied to the emperor broadly throughout the Empire, and by all social classes. The evidence comes in diverse forms: literature, coins, inscriptions, papyri, *et cetera*" (42).

[139] Ibid., 32.

[140] Ibid. These include Lily Ross Taylor, J.S. Reid, and Glen Bowersock (37).

[141] Ibid., 35.

[142] Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*, Classics and Contemporary Thought 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 392.

populace in the first century, the "son of God" title exclusively refers to the Roman emperor and no one else.[143] Peppard sums up well,

> By the end of Tiberius's principate, the mantle of divine sonship had been laid upon each *princeps*, the most famous person in the world, for about eighty years. Therefore, the divine sonship of the emperor—how it was acquired, how it was portrayed, what it meant—is of utmost relevance for understanding the divine sonship of Jesus. … To interpret the term "son of God" in the Roman world without discussing the emperor shows a neglect of his importance and a lack of sensitivity to how language functions in society.[144]

As such, Paul's honoring of Christ as "Son of God" in Eph 4:13 would efficiently activate the broader "son of God" concept of the Caesars. At the same time, it is a disambiguated concept because Christ, contrary to the Caesars, is indeed the Son of God in essence, not only in name.[145] Furthermore, other honors of the Caesars triggered by the other honorific concepts of Christ and the honorific context in 4:1–16 create a cumulative effect that enables the Caesars' "son of God" title to be even more easily activated.[146] They establish the relevance of the Greco-Roman political-religious environment and encourage the audience to draw an efficacious conclusion.[147]

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[143] Reasoner, citing a coin with "TI[BERIVS] CAESAR DIVI AVG[VSTI] F[ILIVS] AVGVSTVS" inscribed, states "Besides being called 'god's son,' an emperor such as Tiberius was also called 'son of the divine Augustus,' since this was another way that Augustus was known after being proclaimed divine" (*Roman Imperial Texts*, 51).

[144] Peppard, *Son of God*, 30.

[145] Peppard considers, "The imperial use of 'son of God' is relevant because of its rarity as a title for an individual combined with its wide dissemination as a title used by the emperor" (ibid., 18).

[146] These include Christ as: (a) the exclusive one Lord (4:4) who (b) ascended and reigns far above all things in heaven (4:9–10) and (c) gives gifts freely to his members for service and to build up the body (4:7–8, 11–13), and (d) is the head of the body (4:14–16).

[147] In response to Martin Hengel that "the imperial title … was perhaps a 'negative stimulus' of Christian usage," Peppard comments "Christians disagreed with and challenged the titles of emperor worship; imperial usage was not a model to be emulated but perhaps a foil to be rejected. … If early Christian usage of 'son of God' or 'kyrios' developed in part because Christians found imperial usage repulsive, then imperial usage certainly had an influence" (*Son of God*, 18).

The lack of attention that scholars give to Christ's "Son of God" title in Ephesians is surprising.[148] Muddiman is perhaps the only one who attempts to discuss more. He comments, "it has the unique sense of the pre-existent heavenly being who became Jesus Christ, the visible image (Col. 1.15) in human form (Phil. 2.8) of the one invisible God."[149] This seems to suggest a vague association with some ancient apocalyptic worldviews. Comparatively, the Caesars' "son of God" title is a more current and efficient concept. Octavian appealed to both 1) his adoption by Julius Caesar to become the son of *divus Iulius* and thereafter *divi filius*, and 2) his "divine ancestry" from Apollo (following an omen that Apollo visited and impregnated Atia in Suetonius' *The Divine Augustus* 94.4) and from Mars as the "'new Romulus' refounding Rome."[150] These have immediate relevance to Christ's divine sonship explicated by the title "Son of God,"

> grounded in multiple claims: there were dynastic considerations in depicting him as a son of David, who himself was a royal son of God; his miraculous infancy and childhood narratives suggested a divine begottenness from birth; and his baptismal experience suggested an adult divine election or adoption.[151]

Thus, their similar associations to divine sonship and ancestry make Augustus' "son of God" title an efficient concept for Christ's "Son of God" title.

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[148] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 256; Best, *Ephesians*, 400; O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 306; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 553–54.

[149] Muddiman, *Epistle*, 203.

[150] Peppard, *Son of God*, 46–48. Peppard further elaborates, "In his competition with Antony for sole possession of Roman *imperium*, he used both aspects of his divine sonship: the filial connection to Caesar swayed the troops and much of the public, while the patronage of Apollo served to rival Antony's self-representation as Dionysus or Hercules. Ultimately, though, the connection to Caesar proved most powerful, and it was this particular divine relationship—*divi filius*—that was propagated by adoption through the Julio-Claudian 'dynasty'" (48).

[151] Ibid., 48.

As Savior

"Savior" is another title commonly used of the Caesars. It was a "divine imperial terminology" recognized throughout the Roman Empire, including the early Christians.[152] Many epigraphic and numismatic evidences in regions like Halicarnassus, Alexandria, Arneae of Lycia, Aezani of Phrygia, Corinth, Acraephia, and Eleusis proclaim Augustus, Claudius, Gaius and Nero as "Savior."[153] Some statues that had been set up in Rome are "consistent with Hellenistic ruler portraits … in every way opposed to the traditions of the Republic" and making Augustus "like one of the 'saviors' of the Greek East."[154] This is evident from the Letter of Paulus Fabius Maximus identifying Augustus as the Savior whom Providence has filled with moral excellence ἀρετῆς and given to all Romans:

> Since Providence, divinely ordering our life, having displayed earnestness and love of honor, arranged for the highest good, by bringing in Augustus, whom for the benefit of humanity she has filled with moral excellence, even as she gave to us and those who will come after us a Savior who not only stopped war, but who shall arrange peace.[155]

The zodiac sign Capricorn was displayed "on coins, both on the occasion of military victories as well as within the programmatic imagery of peace, as a reminder that Augustus's role as savior of the state."[156] Analogous to Augustus, the Savior given by Providence, Jesus is the Messiah, is

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[152] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 71.

[153] Ibid., 71–73.

[154] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 42; J. R. Harrison, "Saviour of the People," in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity. Vol. 9: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published 1986–87*, ed. S. R. Llewelyn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 4–5; Harrison, "Benefactor of the People," in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity. Vol. 9: A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published 1986–87*, ed. S. R. Llewelyn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 6.

[155] This translation is from Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 276–77.

[156] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 48.

the Savior of the church and of humankind. Danker argues, "Of much greater import [in the NT] is the designation of the (deified) ruler as σωτήρ."[157] Long states,

> [T]he emperor was hailed as Savior (σωτήρ, *sōtēr*). This title made the emperor the object of hope, the people's prayers, and the source of the good news (εὐαγγέλιον, *euangelion*). … In the early to mid-first century, the title of "savior" in relation to a people group or body was readily understandable in religious, social, and especially in imperial terms.[158]

Paul's single explicit use of the "Savior" title for Jesus Christ in Eph 5:23 would easily activate the broader "savior" concept widely known to refer to the Caesars. Christ's relationships as "Savior" and "head" to the church are previously discussed on p. 163. Lincoln agrees "'Savior' should be taken … in the way it would have been applied to the emperor in its Hellenistic usage."[159] On the other hand, Long convincingly argues, based on extensive usages of σωτήρ and its cognates in the NT, LXX and non-biblical materials such as coins, statutory, temples and reliefs,

> σωτήρ is used to supplant alternative claims to "savior," … [T]he elevated status of the *Ekklesia* in Ephesians, especially … as likened to the bride of Christ, would supplant a concurrent common social-cultural entity. … [A]n alternative political couple was well represented in Asia Minor and its environs: Caesar in relation to Roma, the personification of the Roman state. The Caesar-savior (σωτήρ) had a ritual marriage relationship with Rome that was actively and strategically depicted as deified *Roma*.[160]

Not only is Ephesians' use of the σωτήρ divine title for Christ a disambiguated reference to the Caesars, Christ's close-knitted relationship to the church, his body, is also a disambiguated comparison to the head-body relationship between the Caesars and Roma. Thus, an *optimally*

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[157] BDAG, s.v. σωτήρ, ῆρος, ὁ.

[158] Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," section on "Christ as Savior (Σωτήρ, Sōtēr) of the Church".

[159] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 370.

[160] Long, *In Step with God's Word*, 209.

relevant interpretation of σωτήρ as an honorific title of Christ in relation to the church his body that directly challenges the Caesars and Roma is achieved. The efficiency of this concept suggests that the political-religious environment is a relevant SCE for the "savior" concepts of Jesus Christ in Ephesians and of the Caesars.

Although Hoehner rightly states that in the NT σωτήρ "always has reference to Jesus … or God … and never to human beings,"[161] he forgets that, in the wider political and religious environment of the Roman world, the Caesars were the prime reference of the title. As such, he fails to associate the Caesars to Christ's "Savior" title. However, Hoehner rightly rejects references to "the concept of the Gnostic redeemer myth."[162] On the other hand, although Lincoln observes the title's "Hellenistic usage" to refer to the Caesars could possibly relate to its use for Christ in Ephesians,[163] he chooses "the OT conception of Yahweh as the Savior or Deliverer of his people" as its background.[164] This OT concept could be efficient for Jewish audiences but might not be so for Gentile readers who would be more familiar with the title's reference to the Caesars.

As Lord

Joseph Fantin's monograph *The Lord of the Entire World* proposes, "Paul's use of the term κύριος involves a polemic against the living Roman emperor and, by implication, his (and

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[161] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 743.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Lincoln comments "It can be claimed that 'Savior' should be taken in the general sense o protector or provider for welfare and order in the way it would have been applied to the emperor in its Hellenistic usage" (*Ephesians*, 370). He also writes, "The use of the title Savior for Christ increased toward the end of the first century … possibly as part of Christians' stance toward its free application to emperors" (ibid., 371).

[164] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 371.

the Roman state's) claim of sovereignty over every aspect of the lives of those under his authority."[165] Fantin states,

> The world of Paul was dominated by the ideology of the imperial regime. In addition to other purposes, Paul's message challenged this ideology and its leader. The role of the emperor himself was an essential aspect of this ideology. Whether explicitly acknowledged or not, the emperor was the *lord* of the empire.[166]

Despite Fantin's view that "anti-imperial polemical pragmatic effect" of εἷς κύριος in Eph 4:5 is weak (which is counter-proposed in ch. 3), he finds that in Paul's use of εἷς to modify κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς in 1 Cor 8:5–6,

> The notions of *relevance* and *efficiency* together with the uniqueness quality of εἷς suggest that Paul is setting Jesus up as the one and only true Lord, or, in order to be sensitive to the range of polemical referents for κύριος, Paul is setting Jesus up as the *supreme lord*. … to challenge the default supreme lord in these cognitive environments … [i.e.] the living emperor.[167]

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[165] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 6.

[166] Ibid. Fantin elaborates, "Values of loyalty and allegiance were important to Romans and especially to the imperial regime. … [T]he Roman people were consistently exposed to information that reminded people of the great deeds of Rome and the benefits that those within its borders enjoyed. Within this context, the emperor himself was portrayed in various ways that communicated his role as the head of this great empire. … In this empire-wide patronage system, the living Caesar was the great benefactor. Thus, the response that the people were expected to give the state and its leader was loyalty and allegiance. This was necessary for the continued benefit for all. PP Since the emperor was the great benefactor, loyalty to the state was essentially loyalty to him. There are many ways in which allegiance can be expressed. Imperial cults provided the emperor with a means of being *present* throughout the empire. They also served as a means for the people to relate to their physically distant ruler. Participation certainly demonstrated loyalty. However, certain acts, whether or not directly associated with emperor worship, expressed loyalty and allegiance more forcefully" (234–35).

[167] Ibid., 227–28. Fantin states, "Observations from our communication theory [RT] suggest that the use of the modifier εἷς can be seen as making a claim over and against other potential lords. The introduction of this modifier should add *relevant* content to the discussion. This modifier intentionally limits the referent of κύριος. Although many may be called 'lord', there is *one lord over all*. … [A]lthough some may see the potential of many referents as a problem for a polemical view, close attention to the context helps focus not only the referent of the term but the nature of the lordship relationship. Paul is calling Jesus the 'one Lord' who is over all other who may be so titled. In addition to *relevance*, *efficiency* suggests that Paul's use of the modifier εἷς should be purposeful. He is not simply using it without consideration of what it is bringing to the context and its implications for his message" (227).

Among the early Caesars in the Empire, emperor Nero was distinctly honored as "the lord of the whole world" (ὁ τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου κύριος Νέρων) in an honorific decree of Akraiphia in Boeotia initiated by a wealthy Epaminondas for exempting Greece from Roman tax. In the same decree, he was also "Zeus the Deliverer," "Zeus Liberator, the Saviour, 'Nero forever'" and "Lord Augustus Nero" (τοῦ κυρίου Σεβαστοῦ Νέρωνος).[168] I envision that the Caesars' lordship over the Roman Empire would also pervade their powers in the imperial temples and shrines, through their political office and role, through the world, in the Roman households, and the military in a way that Christ's lordship over different realms, people, family and society would likely challenge against (discussed in ch. 3).[169]

Fantin states that for Ephesians,

> Emperor worship was a prominent aspect of life … and imperial temples and altars were virtually everywhere. … It is likely, then, that the emperor played an important role in the cognitive environment of the original readers of the letter. It was at the time of this composition (60-62 CE) that a significant increase in the use of the title κύριος begins for Nero. Therefore, it is probable that the default supreme lord in the general cognitive environment was Nero.[170]

This warrants our claim that the Caesars are relevant ad-hoc concepts efficiently activated by Paul's multiple uses of κύριος throughout Ephesians. Moreover, his conclusion "Paul challenges the living emperor for the role of supreme lord of all, including the Roman empire. Christ, not Caesar, is supreme lord."[171] This warrants the finding of this research that the efficacious

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[168] *IG* VII.2713; Sherk, *Roman Empire*, 110–12; Winter, *Divine Honours*, 76.

[169] Specific evidence to support this proposal has yet to be located at the current time.

[170] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 231.

[171] Ibid., 263. Fantin's other conclusions that anti-imperial and anti-Caesar polemics exist in poetic and hymnic material, particularly in Philippians 2:5–11, adds to the strength of this proposal (251–59).

implicature of all of Paul's explicit honoring of Christ in Ephesians is the subversion of the Caesars.

As Pontifex Maximus (High Priest)

In *Res Gestae* 10, the title of *pontifex maximus* or ἀρχιερεύς was bestowed upon Augustus. This was "the most authoritative religious figure for the Roman people."[172] Winter states, "The title chosen was not that of 'greater' (*manior*) but the superlative of 'great' (*magnus*). Its holder was the chief priest who supervised public and private sacrifices and was the head of the college of priests (*pontifices*) in Rome."[173] Josephus records Julius Caesar authorized Hyrcanus to hold the priestly appointment in *Ant*. 14.143. Although the Caesars were not the only ones who held this title, it was unique to them.[174] Numismatic evidences show that this title is stamped on Roman coins minted from the reigns of Augustus to Nero and to many subsequent emperors thereafter.[175] Records also show that it was used by almost every emperor from Augustus to Nero, and from Vespasian onwards.[176]

Thus, *pontifex maximus* or ἀρχιερεύς is an official honorific title of the Caesars. Although Paul did not use the title for Christ in Ephesians, his description of Christ's priestly role and high-priestly benefactions in Eph 2:17–22, 5:26–27 could produce the impression of Christ as a great priest to believers and the church. This would efficiently activate the Caesars' *pontifex*

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[172] Reasoner, *Roman Imperial Texts*, 17 n. 16.

[173] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 74.

[174] Ibid., 75.

[175] Van Meter, *Handbook of Roman Imperial Coins*, 65–88.

[176] Sherk, *Roman Empire*, 53, 57, 78, 83, 102, 116, 133, 152, 153, 176, 177, 180.

maximus title and "high priest" concept and spark an efficacious comparison between Christ and the Caesars that makes the religious setting a relevant SCE. Winter sums up well,

> Christians also had a great high priest. He held the title not just for life, as did the reigning emperor, those involved with imperial sacrifices at the provincial cult level, and Jewish ones as well. … He is presented as a superior *pontifex maximus* presiding over an eternal kingdom, compared with the office held by the Roman emperor that lasted until the time of his apotheosis.[177]

Summary

This chapter demonstrates that the Caesars' honors are efficiently activated as ad-hoc concepts relevant to the honors of Christ in Ephesians. The Caesars' were ubiquitously honored as great political benefactors and they received divine honors. These honors were historically available to Paul and his audience. Their close resemblances with those of Jesus Christ's make them relevant concepts that are easily triggered. Furthermore, through these initial point-counterpoint comparisons and contrasts, the efficacious effect that Paul's audience would derive already begins to surface: that of a subversive challenge against the Caesars by Paul's explicatures honoring Christ. The next chapter presents the efficacious implicature accumulated from these efficient ad-hoc concepts and sums up this thesis's argument that Ephesians' explicit honors of Christ implicates the subversion of the Caesars, concluding that the Greco-Roman political-religious environment is the SCE of Ephesians.

[177] Winter, *Divine Honours*, 75–76.

CHAPTER 5. THE SUBVERSION OF THE CAESARS

The previous chapter has demonstrated that the honorific concepts of the Caesars are efficiently activated by Paul's explicatures in Ephesians honoring Jesus Christ especially as contained in the titles given to Christ as Lord, Head, Son of God, and Savior. Because of their ubiquity, the Caesars' honors were widely known by the population making them the *historically available* benefactors quickly activated by Paul's portrayal of Christ as the Great and Ideal Benefactor. The Caesars' great political and divine honors closely resemble Christ's honors such that they are *ad-hoc concepts efficiently activated*, i.e. with minimum processing effort. This fulfills only half of the *relevance and satisfaction* criteria set out in ch. 1. The other requirement of the criteria is the *efficacy* in meaning effect of these ad-hoc concepts, producing maximum cognitive gains. This chapter focuses on demonstrating that Christ's honors also generate the *efficacious* and *historically plausible* implicature of Christ's subversion of the Caesars. In conclusion, the Greco-Roman political-religious environment of the first-century supplying the honorific concepts of the Caesars is judged *optimally relevant* for the discourse's honors of Christ and fulfills the criteria to be the *shared cognitive environment* (SCE) of Ephesians.

The honorific convention in which Ephesians' honorific discourse participated was commonly used to legitimize the powers of the elite, specifically the Caesars. As we have seen, Paul employed the honorific genre in Ephesians to praise God and Jesus Christ as the Supreme and Great Benefactors respectively for their benefactions to humankind and to the church. It is

further plausible that Paul also intended to explicitly honor Christ at the expense of the Caesars and as a mockery to them on the one hand, and on the other hand, to delegitimize the rule and positions of power of these Roman imperial lords and to subvert them instead. Point-counterpoint comparisons between the honors of Christ and of the Caesars demonstrate that Christ consistently trumps the Caesars in benefactions, authority, and roles. The subversion of the Caesars is thus the resultant implicature derived according to Paul's numerous explicatures honoring Christ at their expense. It is also efficacious in view of the early believers' need for encouragement to boldly live righteous and holy lives counter-cultural to the pervasive pagan environment and counter-imperial to the pressures to participate in emperor worship. This criticism of the Roman Empire contributes to the ongoing political critiques of Ephesians and of the NT. Although scholars differ in their conclusions whether Paul's response to the Empire generally was accommodation or apparent opposition, this research proposes Christ's subversion of the Caesars in Ephesians is an example of the latter, in conjunction with the support of other scholars who view Paul was not subtle in his anti-imperial rhetoric. Furthermore, the *relevance* of other proposed contexts of Ephesians are found to be weak or partial, i.e. only for select sections rather than the whole of the discourse. Finally, I conclude that the political and religious environment of the first century Greco-Roman world is the SCE, i.e. the context, of Ephesians because it is the *optimally relevant* setting that supplies these ad-hoc concepts of the Caesars and that fulfills the criteria of *relevance and satisfaction*. The strong *relevance* in *efficiency* and *efficacy* of this conclusion suggests that it could also serve as a springboard that activates other proposed contexts.

Purpose of Ephesians' Honorific Discourse

It has been established in ch. 2 that Ephesians is an epistolary honorific discourse. The thorough-going honorific structure, words, content, and thematic patterns demonstrate not only Paul's familiarity with the conventional style of honorific documents but also his skill and flexibility in adapting it to best communicate his themes to his audience. More importantly, Paul could have intentionally employed this form, presumably knowing that his audience would have little or no difficulty detecting these honorific features and deciphering his meaning. However, we must ask, *What could Paul's purpose(s) be in using these honorific formulae?* Major proposals for Ephesians' purpose include: a polemic against false teachings, encouragement in spiritual crisis or persecution, admonishment to live consistent with Christ's teaching instead of conforming to pagan magical practices, cosmic reconciliation in Christ, promotion of unity and love in the Church, and "identity formation."[1] Since we have established that Ephesians' honorific discourse praises Jesus Christ as the Great Benefactor, it is essential to identify the common purpose of the first-century honorific convention so that we might assess and suggest Paul's possible intention for employing this genre for his discourse to the Ephesians.

From the large proportion of inscriptions honoring human benefactors, Danker proposes, "the granting of public honors could become a political weapon and under certain circumstances a threat to the stability of the Roman presence." This arises because of the public nature of honorific documents in the imperial period evidenced in the honoring of a Lycian millionaire benefactor Opramoas of Rhodiapolis.[2] Likewise, Zuiderhoek argues for the political-ideological

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[1] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, lxxiii–lxxxvii; O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 51–57; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 97–106.

[2] Danker, *Benefactor*, 442–43.

purpose of euergetism, citing a number of inscriptions honoring great benefactors such as Opramoas from the Lycian League, C. Vibius Salutaris from Ephesos, C. Iulius Demosthenes who was the founder and benefactor of the Oenoanda festival, and Agreophon of Kaunos in Caria.[3] He claims, "Euergetism … was a highly-politicised form of exchange, a process of legitimation of the oligarchic system in which both elite *and* mass were energetically engaged."[4]

Zuiderhoek supports his proposal based on his examination of benefactors' gifts whether monetary or in the form of buildings and constructions. He finds that their motivations were "of a political and ideological rather than an economic nature" and "concerned the symbolic affirmation of civic social and political ideals, and the elite's need for affirmation and legitimation of their power and prestige."[5] Zuiderhoek finds that the majority of the evidence depicting civic euergetism during the early Empire are located in Asia Minor.[6] He describes an honorific inscription as "a discourse of moral excellence" that the region's populace was familiar with.[7] This familiarity is due largely to two factors. First, honorific inscriptions are ubiquitous in

[3] Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence*, 123–25.

[4] Ibid., 122.

[5] Ibid., 52. An evidence backing this conclusion is his analysis of benefactors' monetary gifts that reveals that the state was in fact not in need of financial assistance (23–36) because "(a) the elite expenditure on benefactions commonly comprised just a small percentage of aggregate annual elite income; (b) that in most cities only a tiny number of elite families would have been able to finance major benefactions, such as the donation of a large public building or a big annual festival, with some regularity or at all; (c) that, consequently, such big gifts, even if often considered emblematic of Greco-Roman munificence by modern historians, must in reality have been comparatively rare, an observation that is borne out by the evidence for munificence itself, in which smaller-scale gifts generally predominate; (d) that the majority of gifts were targeted at the city, i.e. the citizens as a collective, not the poor, and concerned prestige projects or public events with strong political and ideological-symbolic overtones that did little or nothing to alleviate the situation of poorer citizens; and finally (e) that expenditure on benefactions is unlikely to have generated spin-offs that might have a more indirect (and unintended) contribution to the welfare of the non-elite citizenry" (35).

[6] Ibid., 12–13.

[7] Ibid., 125.

nature, being "public monuments…. Often accompanied by statues of the honorand, often located at a spot closely associated with his or her benefaction, they had a strong symbolic and representational function" that people could see easily.[8] Second, they "constituted a living discourse, known to the majority of the inhabitants of the Greek cities, and used on important public occasions," such as "during honorific rituals which were part of major public events (festivals, public burials) and which probably involved the larger part of the city's population" and in "the crowning ceremonies of benefactors, the acclamations in the assembly, or the shouting of praise in the theatre during shows."[9] As such, people would have been able to hear, recognize and understand them quickly. Thus, Zuiderhoek concludes that epigraphic and ritualistic discourses of moral excellence are,

> deeply rooted in Greek political ideological … [T]he 'rule of power' that the richer elite citizens should govern the city was justified by a belief, shared by both rulers and subordinates, in the moral superiority of the members of this ruling elite … defined in terms of age-old notions or morally just behavior, found its expression in the benefactions made by the elite, and was emphasized by the subordinates in public rituals of praise. With these rituals, … subordinates gave expression to their consent to the power system…. The honorific inscription, finally, proved an ideal medium for publicly advertising the virtuous and excellent character of the city's elite.[10]

In addition, Bruno Blumenfeld argues, "Paul's views in general, and particularly in the letters to the Romans and the Philippians, are structurally, argumentatively and conceptually coherent with Classical and Hellenistic political thought."[11] He compares "the role of the *euergetēs* and the relation between him and the community … between the earlier Hellenistic

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[8] Ibid., 126.

[9] Ibid., 126–29.

[10] Ibid., 132–33.

[11] Blumenfeld, *Political Paul*, 12.

period, up to about the beginning of the second century BCE, and the later Hellenistic period." His description deserves to be quoted in full:

> The first [period] is marked by the prosperity of the middle class that followed the cessation of the *diadochi* wars, the second by the ruin of the same class as a result of the Macedonian, Syrian and Achaean wars, and the concentration of resources in the hands of a minority enjoying Roman favor. During the first period, benefactors were honored for their patriotism rather than their generosity, and for excellence in executing the functions entrusted to them … for the services they render the community…, and not for their personal qualities.… In the second period, city affairs change hands, being transferred from the Assembly to an often hereditary minority that pays for the services required by the state and is repaid by having honors piled on it–an urban aristocracy and a cultural elite at the same time. Second-century BCE inscriptions document a change in the function and situation of the benefactor vis-à-vis the city. It is only now that one can see the transformation of *euergesia* into a form of government, and that the *euergetēs* begins to enjoy a stature above that of other citizens. The benefactions the *euergetēs* renders the city are vital to its survival…. The *euergetai* repeatedly receive the traditional honors, but new ones also emerge: sacrifices for their recovery from illness, funeral pageants, cults and so on. Decrees acclaim the moral qualities of the benefactor: his piety, faithfulness to parents, loyalty to friends. His nature is a distinct kind. His *aretē* is said to have been manifest since youth, his conduct is proclaimed to be equal that of his ancestors. … salvation comes from the benefactors, because of their wealth and because of the favor they enjoy at the royal or imperial courts.[12]

Although Blumenfeld did not clarify the extent of his "later Hellenistic period," this distinct "transformation of *euergesia*" could purportedly have influenced the early Roman imperial age beginning with Caesar Augustus.[13] This formal politicization of the *euergetēs*' role, in conjunction with the consolidation of power in the hands of the minority aristocrats and elites, means that benefactors would increasingly seek for "affirmation and legitimation of their power and prestige."[14] The benefit of *euergetism* and/or patronage for consolidation of power would work to the great advantage of the Caesars' political agenda to maintain their continuous rule

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[12] Ibid., 103–4.

[13] Ibid., 103.

[14] Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence*, 52.

over the vast provinces of the empire. John K. Chow investigates the use of patronage in Corinth and states,

> The institution of patronage has … helped to explain how the Roman rulers were able to rule such an enormous empire with the minimal number of officials. The networks of relationships … can roughly be seen as a hierarchy made up of the emperor, Roman officials, local notables and the populace. A kind of patronal hierarchy may be seen in the structure of relationships in different institutions, such as the association and the household.[15]

This hierarchical structure of relationships with the Caesars positioned at the pinnacle could be indicative for the rest of the Empire as well. Indeed, Richard A. Horsley affirms the early emperors exploited the patronage system, directly controlled the top elites, and through them the rest of the Empire that was linked one way or the other to the web of *euergetism* and patronage relationships.[16] Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller also attest,

> Augustus sought to establish his legitimacy not only by restoring the social order, but also by demonstrating his own supremacy in it through the traditional modes of patronage and beneficence. … Since subjects could not repay imperial benefactions in kind, the reciprocity ethic dictated that they make a return in the form of deference, respect and loyalty.[17]

As much as *euergetism* and patronage served the Caesars' need for administrating a vast Empire, it also posed threats as regional elites became wealthy and powerful with the followings

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[15] John K. Chow, "Patronage in Roman Corinth," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 104–25.

[16] Richard A. Horsley states, "Augustus and the Principate brought about a profound transformation in the system of patronage in Rome itself, which included and was partly caused by running the empire as a vast new network of patronage. Despite the abolition of elections, in which the patronage pyramids had played a key role during the Republic, patronage patterns continued. The mass of people in Rome itself became more and more dependent on the emperor's patronage (Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.4). But although he became the universal patron, he did not displace other patrons at the top of the system. Instead, he manipulated the pluralist system, both in Rome itself, and particularly in the administration of the empire, so that all strands in the competing pyramids of patronage converged on the emperor at the center. … In effect, the emperor became patron of the great senatorial and equestrian figures, and exercised his power through them" (*Paul and Empire*, 91–92).

[17] Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, "Patronal Power Relations," in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 96–103.

of many beneficiaries and clients. John Nicols, basing on Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, Book 56, 25.6 indicating Caesar Augustus' regulation of public honors for governors from τῷ ὑπηκόῳ (namely non-Roman citizens and foreign communities), suggests that for Augustus, "[t]itles like σωτὴρ, κτίστης and θεός challenged the uniqueness of his own achievement and could not be allowed to senators."[18] This is substantiated by epigraphic records especially after AD 11/12 showing "a clear and dramatic decline … of civic patronage in the Greek speaking provinces," the eastern part of the Roman Empire while it is "five or six times more frequent in the western provinces."[19] Chow affirms the reverential uses of "honorific titles like 'patron,' 'benefactor,' 'saviour,' and 'son of a god,'" signify superiority and were reserved only for the emperor and the imperial family.[20] Thus, Augustus controlled the power base of those who posed an immediate threat to his position as emperor. Provincial elites desiring to secure their own status and seeking to gain continuous Roman favor might now divert their honors more directly to the Caesars as

[18] John Nicols, "Patrons of Greek Cities in the Early Principate," *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 80 (1990): 81–100. Τῷ ὑπηκόῳ means "to the one being subjected," commonly translated "subjected nations" (Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 56.25.6 [Cary, LCL]). Nicols also includes the use of πάτρων as forbidden (ibid., 91; Jonathan Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons, and Benefactors: Roman Palestine and the Gospel of Luke*, WUNT 2/259 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009], 40).

[19] Nicols, "Patrons of Greek Cities," 83. Nicols clarifies "[t]he patronage discussed…is the formal Roman variety which is not necessarily identical to what the sociologist might recognize" (81 n.1).

[20] Chow, "Patronage in Roman Corinth," 105. He writes, "If the Roman emperor was comparable to the patron of the entire Empire, in some ways, he was the patron of Corinth too. That he was able to bring peace and order to a vast Empire naturally would inspire reverence and awe. Not surprisingly, in some parts of the Empire, especially in the Greek east, such reverence for the Roman rulers was expressed by showering them and members of the imperial family with honorific titles like 'patron,' 'benefactor,' 'saviour' and 'son of a god,' which suggest a greatly superior status" (105).

expressions of loyalty and a form of "consent" to be ruled,[21] perhaps so that they might be conferred the title φιλοκαίσαρος "friend of Caesar" in return.[22]

Bearing in mind the background of euergetism's political-ideological goal effected through the means of honorific inscriptions and decrees, we return to Paul's purpose for his honorific discourse and ponder: *Could Paul plausibly be "legitimizing" Christ's power and position before his audience?* In the paganistic culture of the first-century world, people were under constant political and social pressures to conform and participate in emperor worship. The earlier believers were no exception. Becoming a faithful follower of Christ and demonstrating commitment and conviction to Christ through one's words and deeds were counter-cultural and counter-imperial choices the early believers had to make. They were in all probability much harder than we can imagine. Without a firm defense for who Christ is and what he had done, it would be nearly impossible for the early believers to win, keep, and disciple converts, and to build the identity and unity of the church. Long provides some perspectives of the challenges confronting Paul's audience in Asia Minor:

> The allegiance and orientation of believers is at stake: Would they bow to the predominant social influence of paganism and emperor, or to God's grace in Jesus the Messiah and Lord over all (Eph 2:1-2; 2:4-7)? Also, to whom were the believers looking for imitation of virtue in order to honor God? Who was the exemplary Lord? Was it the Augustus-like and increasingly corrupt Nero … or Jesus the crucified Jewish Messiah? Finally, why would one want to remain associated with the church body, since one's

[21] Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence*, 133.

[22] The title "served to indicate to the inhabitants of the Empire the importance of those sent to govern or acting as supporters." The Latin "*Amicus* was used in official documents of provincial governors, procurators, equestrian secretaries and in one notable case of two distinguished residents of Alexandria with no official status at all." 353 individuals were designated "friends of Caesar" in the whole period of the Roman Empire (J. A. Crook, *Consilium Principis: Imperial Councils and Counsellors from Augustus to Diocletian* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955], 23–24, 149–89; quoted in Winter, *Divine Honours*, 43).

> social identity would be potentially damaged? Was there any value to living like Christ and suffering in mission in the world (3:13)?[23]

It may sound absurd today to think that Jesus Christ needs our "legitimizing." However, it is not far-fetched to propose that *Paul honors Jesus Christ at the expense of the Caesars to delegitimize their rule and power so as to bolster the early believers' faith in Christ*. As we have seen, Paul consistently, explicitly, and intentionally applies to Christ political-religious titles, honors, and ideologies similar to or commonly known to refer to the Caesars. From an imperialistic point of view, Paul's actions could have constituted an abuse of the Caesars' titles and a mockery to them. While many first-century honorific inscriptions and decrees had been extensively used to legitimize the Caesars' rule on many occasions, Ephesians' honorific discourse functions reversely to demote them and delegitimize their claims of divinity instead. It is plausible Paul adopted this strategy to explicitly honor Jesus Christ and simultaneously to subvert the Caesars *efficiently* and *efficaciously*, i.e. *relevantly*, to the satisfaction of his readers. The next section presents how Christ's subversion of the Caesars is the efficacious implicature.

The Efficacious Implicature

Continuing from what has been presented in chs. 3 and 4, I will here offer point-counterpoint comparisons between the honors of Jesus Christ and of the Caesars in order to show the efficacious implicature that Christ consistently subverts the Caesars in benefaction, authority, and roles. The ostensive comparison of agency roles between Christ and the Caesars first initiated in 1:3–14 is sustained through the rest of the honorific discourse and progressively activates other comparisons of honorific concepts in the pericopes that comprise other

[23] Long, "Ephesians, Critical Issues," "Purposes of Ephesians."

explicatures honoring Christ (1:20–23; 2:11–22; 3:8–13; 4:1–6, 7–16; 5:15–33; 6:1–20). These point-counterpoint comparisons are described below. Table 5.1 on p. 238–39 summarizes and presents these comparisons in a visual format.

In 1:3–14, Paul's repeated emphases of Christ's role as the divine agent and human viceroy of God efficiently activate commonly accepted notions of the Caesars as the viceroy and representative of Jupiter-Zeus. Paul states clearly that God's purpose is "to sum up all things in Christ" (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, 1:10). On the other hand, Augustus, as well as the other Caesars, needed to position themselves in that role in order to legitimize their rule. Christ therefore serves a greater divine purpose that commands greater honors than the Caesars.

Paul's explicatures of Christ's supreme authority and position over all things far above all rule, authority, dominion and power, including spiritual entities and human rulers (1:20–23; 2:2) proclaim Christ's triumph and rule over all forms of powers, including the Caesars. These are described as "the working of God's mighty strength" (τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ, 1:19) and could be conceived as the honors God bestowed upon Christ for his great benefactions to humankind and to the church (2:11–22). Although the Caesars were great in authority and position, they were supplanted by the authority of Christ. While they were apotheosized by other human emperors after death, Christ conquered death and was raised from the dead (1:20). While the Caesars were pictured as seated among deities on cameos and reliefs and given privileged seats of honor at secular games, Christ is seated in the supreme position of authority on God's right (1:21). While sculptures and jewelries portray the Caesars subjugating people under their feet, all things including the Caesars are subjected under Christ feet (1:22). Moreover, the metaphorical concept of "head" given to Christ subverts that of the Caesars'. Augustus and the Caesars had established and expanded the large Roman Empire that was their

political body. Christ, on the other hand, is the head over all things (not excluding the Caesars) given to the church, his body (1:22–23). At each point of comparison, Christ is unambiguously at a higher position with more supreme authority than the Caesars. In fact, four times Paul uses the all-inclusive sense of πᾶς to implicate that the authority and position of Christ supplants the Caesars'.

Having praised Christ as God's human viceroy (1:3–14) and portrayed Christ's supreme authority as honors bestowed by God (1:20–23), Paul reminded his audiences four times Christ is the agent (τῷ Χριστῷ, 2:5; ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, 2:6, 7, 10) in whom they were saved by grace as a gift of God so that they might live and do good works prepared beforehand (2:8–10). Thus far in the discourse, Paul has consistently depicted Christ in a supportive role to God the Supreme Benefactor who blessed humankind and the church with his gracious and generous benefactions. In 2:11–22, Paul focuses his readers' attention on Christ's benefactions, roles, and authority. The comparison with the Caesars' would also continue.

In 2:13–18, Christ sacrificed himself to suffer and die for the redemption of humankind and the church. Jesus Christ himself became Peace and the Peacemaker. Christ secured peace and reconciliation between Gentiles and Jews, and reconciled them to God by his own bloodshed and violent death on the Roman cross. Christ made peace within humanity, overcoming political, nationalistic, and religious barriers, and bridged the chasm between humanity and God. This peace is living and efficacious and needs no monument like the Ara Pacis to commemorate it. Comparatively, the peace and security secured by Augustus for the Roman Empire cost the sacrifices and bloodshed of thousands of soldiers whose honors were instead subsumed by him and named the peace of Augustus to legitimize his rule. Christ's own exemplary self-sacrifice

that efficaciously gained eternal salvation for all humanity outclassed and outlasted the "sacrifices" the Caesars incurred and the temporary redemption they so proudly proclaimed.

Christ brought the Gentiles near for their good: to become fellow citizens with the Jews (συμπολῖται, 2:19) and fellow heirs, fellow members, and fellow partakers of the promise (συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα καὶ συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, 3:6). On the other hand, foreign dignitaries and kings pledged and sent their children to Augustus to gain his friendship in order that he would not attack their cities (*Res Gestae* 31–32). Augustus might have been the founder of the Roman Empire consisting of Roman citizens and subjugated peoples of various ethnicities and nationalities but Christ is the founder of "a new humanity" comprising of all Christians unlimited by geography, politics, nationality or time. The church comprises the reconciled and united body of both Jewish and Gentile believers with the only condition of "citizenship" being to accept God's grace and gift of salvation through Jesus Christ (2:4–7, 11–22). Its inclusive scope makes it a larger and timeless kingdom than the Roman Empire.

Augustus and the Caesars contributed to the building of many public and sacred infrastructures, but Christ is the keystone that holds the church together and the Lord in whom the church grows into a holy temple and a dwelling of God unsurpassed by any other. The Caesars held the official title of *pontifex maximus* for ceremonial purposes but Christ himself became both the priest and sacrifice to provide the access to the Father (2:19–22). Although Paul did not employ the title ἀρχιερεύς for Christ, his portrayal of Christ's priestly role and benefactions of sanctifying the church and presenting her holy and blameless (5:26–27) subverts the Caesars who were *pontifex maximus* only by title and status more than by deeds. Christ is the Lord in and through whom believers could approach God boldly and confidently (3:11–12) while the Caesars were lords whom Romans feared. Moreover, Christ's benefactions of destroying the

barrier and abolishing the law effectively eliminated the enmity and bridged the antagonism between Gentiles and Jews. This is something the Caesars could never accomplish.

In 4:1–6, Paul's self-identification as "the prisoner of the Lord" (ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ, 4:1) recalls his physical situation awaiting trial before the human lord Caesar Nero. At the same time, it emphasizes the greater lordship of Christ whom he served and for whom he was imprisoned. Paul's admonishment for his audiences to preserve the unity in the assembly emphasized Christ as the "one Lord" (εἷς κύριος, 4:5), thus excluding and delegitimizing the Caesars' claim to sovereign power over the Empire as lord.

In 4:8, Paul ignites the imagery of a triumphal parade. The type of victory parades efficiently relevant to the majority of Paul's audience were military triumphs resulted from the Romans' foreign war campaigns and civil battles for the sake of political power. *Res Gestae* 26–33 state the various regions Augustus had brought under the rule of Rome and the kings and embassies that sought friendship with Augustus. While such parades were numerous, vivid, and grand in display, they were nevertheless limited as political victories in the earthly realm and are inferior to Christ's in three ways. First, Christ's triumph involves his ascension to the highest place far above the heavens (4:8a, 10). This recounts his position on God's right previously mentioned in 1:21. His purpose is "to fulfill/complete all things" (ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα, 4:10b) which references back to the phrase "to sum up all things" in 1:10. However, in the Caesars' triumphs, they ascended onto their chariots acting as a god during the procession and then up to the Temple of Jupiter at the Capitoline hill at the end to sacrifice their captives to Jupiter. Christ's triumphal parade in the divine realms dwarfs the Caesars' on earth. Second, the Caesars' triumphantor role and authority was over subjugated people but Christ is the triumphant victor over the heavens (4:8b). Christ's triumphant victor role and authority greatly surpass the physical

and military natures of the Caesars' triumphs. Third, Christ's gifts exceed the Caesars' gifts in essence and longevity. The Caesars gave away enormous amounts of money, gifts, and military awards so as to gain greater support and votes to establish their monarchy rule and to legitimize their powers. However, Christ's gifts of ministers with abilities in apostleship, prophecy, evangelizing, pastoring and teaching enabled by the Spirit could never be purchased with money or wealth nor imitated by humans (4:8c, 11). Christ's ministers serve to equip believers for works of service and build up the body of Christ so that they would ultimately attain unity and the church could fully grow in love (4:12–16). Christ's benefactions might be less tangible but they are certainly more enduring and essential than the Caesars'. Christ subverts the Caesars again in his ascension, triumph, and gifts.

Paul's uses of various titles for Christ in Ephesians are ostensibly subversive explicatures against the Caesars in the discourse. As the "Son of God" in essence by his true divine sonship and as God's Beloved (4:13; 1:6), Christ exceeds the Caesars whose "son of god" title was only a form of status that enabled them to maintain the worship and loyalty of the people through the imperial cult so as to legitimize their rule over the empire. Paul's explicit honor of Christ as "the Perfect Man" also competes against the Caesars who were *princeps*, "first citizens," being exemplary models and ideal rulers to their respective followers and citizens.

In addition, Paul supplants the Caesars directly by honoring Christ as the "Savior of the body" (5:23). The Caesars were "saviors" because of the peace and security they "secured" in the empire, though ironically not without the deaths of thousands of solders through various war campaigns. Christ, on the other hand, offers salvation from sin and eternal death by having personally suffered and died on behalf of all humanity, becoming the true Savior. Christ's self-sacrificial demonstration of true saviorhood supplants the Caesars who were saviors only by

name. In the same verse, Christ's headship also undermines the headship of the Caesars efficaciously. Christ is "head of the church" recalls the previous two instances in 1:22b and 4:15b when "head" was used. His authority over the church is unlikely the Caesars. Seneca advised Nero "While Caesar needs power, the state also needs a head" (*De Clem.* I.4.3). Thus, the Caesars' headship was closely concerned with maintenance and securing of their political power over the Empire. Christ's headship, on the other hand, is not about how much power believers can "supply" him but how he could empower them through his gifts in order for them to be equipped and to attain the unity, for the growth of the church body (4:11–16).

Furthermore, Christ's lordship is expressly depicted over various realms through Paul's use of the title "Lord" in the discourse. In 5:15–21, believers are exhorted to live wisely in days of evil (5:15–16) and to "understand what the will of the Lord is" (συνίετε τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου, 5:17). Although Christ is Lord, his will is knowable. He desires believers to live honorably in word and deed in manner worthy of the benefactions they received (Eph 4–6). However, the same could not be said of the Caesars whose obsession over maintaining their powers would have kept their wills secret and uncertain to anyone who might threaten their monarchy, not to mention free persons or plebs. In 6:1–20, Christ is Lord of Christian households, battles, and faithful ministers. The portrayals of the church in 6:10–20 as a standing army commanded to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might" (ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ κράτει τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ, 6:10), geared with the full armor of God described with honorific virtues, and engaged in prayer elucidate that Christ the triumphant victor and ascended Lord would energize his army with his divine power against all forms of enemies, spiritual and human. In contrast, the Caesars could never guarantee divine assistance for the Roman army. They could only depend on human might to fight their battles and hope that the "deities" they

pray to could respond. As a result of these comparisons, Christ's lordship authority ostensibly subverts the Caesars' lordship over the Roman Empire.

Thus, it can be seen that each of Paul's explicatures in Ephesians honoring Jesus Christ not only activates the Caesars' honorific concepts but also produces the efficacious implicature that Christ subverts the Caesars. The efficacy of this cognitive effect is gained from each explicature triggering its own relevant ad-hoc concept as well as the cumulative effects of all the explicatures each informing the others after it and interpreting the ones before it. As such, the subversion of the Caesars is the resultant efficacious implicature optimally relevant to the early believers who were under severe societal pressure to conform to emperor worship and imperial cultic practices. Under such a pervasive environment, the churches in Asia Minor could presumably face intense difficulty in identity formation (1) within themselves as small assemblies trying to maintain their allegiance and faith in Christ in the midst of their neighbors' perverse lifestyle, and (2) in relation to Jewish Christians and assemblies who might take pride in their Judaic tradition, covenantal privileges, or political nationalistic supremacy to the exclusion or disregard of the Gentile believers. Knowing that his audience could be overwhelmed by pressures exerted from their political-religious environment and the potentially discouraging situations within their assemblies, it is plausible that Paul intentionally portrays the true essence of Jesus Christ in terms closely resembling the Caesars believing that their relevance would enable his audience to infer this efficacious implicature that their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ subverts the Caesars. As such, they could have greater confidence and boldness to live honorably and worthily in response to the salvific benefactions they received from God and Jesus Christ, through their honorific lives and counter-cultural conduct in response to God and before the people surrounding them.

Table 5.1. Comparisons of Honorific Concepts between Jesus Christ and the Caesars		
Ephesians	Jesus Christ	The Caesars
1:3–14	Role: God's human viceroy and Agent *Purpose: To sum up all things*	Role: Viceroy of Jupiter-Zeus and Providence *Purpose: To legitimize rule*
1:20–23	Authority over all: Raised from the dead, Seated with God far above all powers, and every name that is named, All things subjected under his feet Head over all things given to the church	Position/Authority: Apotheosized, Seated with Roma and among deities, seat of honor at games, Subjugated people under their feet Head of the Roman Empire
2:11–22	Benefactions: Sacrificed himself and died on the cross Brought Gentiles near Destroyed hostility/abolished the law Reconciled/united Gentiles and Jews Reconciled both to God Keystone of the whole building *Purposes:* Roles: *To reconcile* Peace and Peacemaker *To found a new humanity* Founder *To provide access to the Father* Priest Authority: Lord in whom building grows into a holy temple and dwelling of God	Benefactions: (Soldiers sacrificed in wars) (Foreign kings brought their children) Their office unified the people Built public and sacred infrastructures Roles: *Purposes:* Peace of Augustus *To legitimize rule* Founder *To establish a monarchy* Pontifex Maximus *Ceremonial*
3:8–13	Authority: Lord in whom believers have boldness and confident access to God	Authority: Lord in whom Romans must fear and revere
4:1–6	Authority: Lord of Paul the political prisoner The one Lord who unites the church	Authority: Caesar was the human lord before whom Paul awaited trial

Table 5.1. Comparisons of Honorific Concepts between Jesus Christ and the Caesars		
Ephesians	Jesus Christ	The Caesars
4:7–10	Authority over all: Ascended on high, far above the heavens Role: Triumphant victor Benefaction: Gives ministers as gifts *Purpose of ascension: To fulfill/complete all things*	Position/Authority: Ascended the chariot and Capitoline hill Role: Triumphantor Benefaction: Gave money, gifts and military awards *Purpose of ascension: To act as god; to sacrifice prisoners to Jupiter*
4:11–16	Roles: Son of God, Perfect Man Authority: Head from whom the whole body grows *Purpose of gifts:* *Until all attain unity of faithfulness and knowledge of the Son of God, the Perfect Man.*	Roles: Son of god, Princeps Authority: Head of the Roman Empire *Purpose of gifts:* *To gain votes and support for monarchy. To legitimize power.*
5:15–21	Authority: Divine Lord whose will is knowable	Authority: Human lord whose will was uncertain
5:22–33	Role: Savior of his body (the church) Authority: Head of the church (his body) *Purposes:* *To sanctify the church, to present the church holy and blameless*	Role: Savior of the Roman Empire Authority: Head of the Roman Empire
6:1–20	Authority: Lord of Christian households Lordship of Christian army and battles Lord of faithful ministers	Authority: Lord of the Roman army

Thus, the subversion of the Caesars is the efficacious implicature of Paul's numerous explicit honors of Christ in Ephesians. This resultant implicature substantiates Horsley's position,

> [Paul] shared the language of the Empire and even some of the particular forms of persuasion, he borrowed the themes and terms of the Empire, and he established communities that remained resident in the dominant culture. Yet he used those themes and terms to articulate the gospel of, and build assemblies loyal to, a Lord and a God who not only offered an alternative to, but stood in judgment over, the imperial Savior and the ostensible "peace and security" he offered.[24]

The efficacy of this implicature supports the proposed purpose of Ephesians' honorific discourse to delegitimize the Caesars' rule and power and strengthen the faith of the early believers and the church. Advancing this conclusion further in the next section, I propose this subversive implicature is an apparent opposition to the Roman Empire, one that Paul's audiences would have been able to comprehend efficiently and effortlessly.

Accommodation or Opposition?

In the current state of political critiques of the NT and of Ephesians, scholars differ in their judgments regarding Paul's letters as his responses to Roman politics and Empire. In this "spectrum,"[25] they range between accommodations and oppositions. For example, Horsley posits at the beginning, "Christianity was a product of empire. in one of the great ironies of history, what became the established religion of empire started as an anti-imperial movement."[26]

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[24] Horsley, *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, 19–20.

[25] Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, ch. 4 "Gospel and Empire," 60.

[26] Horsley, *Paul and Empire*, 1. He further states, "in anticipation of the termination of 'this evil age' at the parousia of Christ, Paul was energetically establishing *ekklēsiai* among the nations that were alternatives to official 'assemblies' of cities such as Thessalonica, Philippi, and Corinth" (1). To these locations we could add Ephesus and the whole region of Asia Minor.

Referencing other scholars like Dieter Georgi, Neil Elliott, and Wright, Horsley proposes "Paul couched his gospel in *pointedly* anti-imperial terms and that he understood his assemblies as communities of an alternate society (emphasis mine)."[27] He concludes,

> The explorations of various issues, themes, and passages in Paul's letters … indicate that in many interrelated respects, the Roman imperial order is the context in which Paul's gospel and mission must be understood. They also indicate that Paul presented his gospel and organized his assemblies in opposition to that order, and even in effective resistance to it.[28]

His view that Paul was explicitly opposed to the Empire appears to soften upon interacting with the work of political scientist James C Scott, whose "analysis focuses on heavily dominated peoples, … and draws on many studies of peasant movements."[29] Nevertheless, Horsley maintains,

> Paul was spearheading an international movement of political resistance. The hidden transcript he helped develop envisioned a revolutionary transformation of the Roman imperial order. The movement's elaborate hidden transcript … remained "a substitute for an act of assertion directly in the face of power."[30]

A number of other contributors in the volumes *Paul and Empire* and *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* are generally in favor that Paul did not overtly cushion his resistance efforts nor was he reserved in his anti-imperial rhetoric but was an active opponent of the Empire.[31]

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[27] Horsley, *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, 19.

[28] Ibid., 23.

[29] Horsley, *Hidden Transcripts*, 3. Horsley states, "It is not difficult to sort out the observations and generalizations applicable to the Palestinian peasantry among whom Jesus operated from those more specific to master-slave and patron-client relations in the cities where Paul carried out his mission" (3).

[30] Ibid., 23.

[31] Most contributors in the first volume take this position. In *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, the contributors include Robert Jewett, Abraham Smith, Rollin A. Ramsaran, Efrain Agosto, Erik M. Heen, and Jennifer Wright Knust.

On the other hand, Neil Elliott proposes that in Rom 13:1–7 "Paul requires subordination rather than defiant opposition of the authorities" and purposes "to encourage submission, for now, to the authorities, rather than desperate resistance; and thus to safeguard the most vulnerable around and among the Roman Christians, those Jews struggling to rebuild their shattered community in the wake of imperial violence."[32] Elliott's critique of Paul and Empire is generally conservative. His dating of the "later" letters of Paul including Ephesians to a post-apostolic age unfortunately causes him to apply his accommodative position upon them.[33] He suggests, "'Paul' … advocat[es] the subordination of women to men, of slaves to masters, and of subjects to governing authorities, mirroring the dominant codes of Roman society."[34] Despite this, Elliott's interpretation of "Paul's theology of the Powers" from 1 Corinthians supports this work's argument that the Caesars are in view in Paul's uses of ἀρχή and ἐξουσία in Ephesians. Elliott insists

> Paul's apocalyptic language about the Powers resists transposing the significance of Jesus' death from the earthly to the heavenly plane. It is precisely Paul's own insistence that the Powers remain unconquered until "the end," when they meet their decisive defeat at God's hands, that resists any narrowly spiritual interpretation of the Powers.[35]

He substantiates that Paul (1) adopts "a worldview in which spiritual forces stand behind political powers on earth;" (2) posits "the work of 'heavenly' Powers opposed to God … is clearly described as being carried out through very human instruments;" and (3) "uses the metaphor of the triumphal procession … to refer to his own physical abuse at the hands of very

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[32] Elliott, "Romans 13:1–7," 196, 203. Elliott later considers this passage as an example of Paul's hidden transcript ("Strategies of Resistance," 119–22).

[33] Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message," 180; Elliott, "The Apostle Paul and Empire," 100.

[34] Elliott, "The Apostle Paul and Empire," 100.

[35] Elliott, "Anti-Imperial Message," 180.

real earthly authorities."[36] He also argues that "the crucifixion of Jesus … reveals 'the rulers of this age,' indeed 'every rule and authority and power'—procurators, kings, emperors, as well as supernatural 'powers' who stand behind them—as intractably hostile to God and as doomed to be destroyed by the Messiah at 'the end.'"[37]

Warren Carter, whose works focus mainly on the Gospels, proposes that the writers of Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastorals "take an accommodationist approach to society" and that these letters are representative of a "submitting to, praying for, and honoring the Emperor" type of Christian response towards the Roman Empire.[38] In a similar vein, Maier proposes, "Ephesians is not so much anti-imperial, but … 'supraimperial'—it uses imperial language and imagery to promote a confession of Christ that surpasses whatever claims can be made about the emperor and the harmonious social order he has achieved."[39] Employing the method of "rhetography,"[40] Maier rightly notes "Ephesians echoes the imperial language and style of

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[36] Ibid., 179–80.

[37] Ibid., 176. Elliott later stands by his anti-imperial message of the cross, stating, "the body exhibited by the Empire as tortured and crucified has been decisively *counter-exhibited* by God's act in raising Jesus from the dead; and that counter-display continues to be re-presented by apostolic and ecclesial performance as the locus of God's life-giving power" ("Paul's Self-Presentation as Anti-Imperial," 84).

[38] Carter, *Roman Empire and the NT*, 22. Carter proposes five possible Christian evaluations and responses towards the Roman Empire, namely, (1) viewing the Empire as being of the devil; (2) viewing the Empire as under God's judgment; (3) encouragement to "adopt practices of (limited) transformation shaped by God's purposes;" (4) formation of "alternative communities with practices that provide life-giving alternatives to the empire's ways;" and (5) "submitting to, praying for, and honoring the Emperor" (14–23). Carter concludes that the early believers generally adopted a deliberate strategy consisting of a mixture of these responses. He states, "Survival, engagement, and accommodation mix with protest, critique, alternative ways of being, and imagined violent judgment. … Opposition and accommodate coexist. … [T]his mix of opposition and pragmatic survival is a deliberate strategy" (24). He also proposes "three expressions of resistance: imagining Rome's violent overthrow, employing disguised and ambiguous protest, and using flattery" (119–36).

[39] Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*, 142.

[40] Ibid., 28–31.Vernon K. Robbins defines "rhetography/ekphrasis" this way: "A speaker or a writer composes, intentionally or unintentionally, a context of communication through statements or signs that conjure visual images in the mind which, in turn, evoke 'familiar' contexts that provide meaning for the reader or hearer" ("Rhetography: A New Way of Seeing the Familiar Text," in *Words Well Spoken: George Kennedy's Rhetoric of the*

Roman imperial honorific culture, especially that of the rhetoric of inscriptions."[41] His support for an imperial setting for Ephesians is encouraging;[42] however, a few aspects of his proposal are problematic. Maier emphasizes peace as the major theme of the discourse and situates Ephesians' political language and imagery in the likenesses of Plutarch, Dio of Prusa, and Aelius Aristides who promoted ideals of concord or *homonoia*, citing epigraphic, numismatic and statuary evidences from the Flavian era in support of his thesis.[43] Although peace is an important explicature that triggers efficient concepts of the Caesars, Maier overemphasizes it to the neglect of other critical themes of the discourse. In addition, Ephesians' emphasis on peace is between Jewish and Gentile Christians, not a "pacification of enemies through the empire-wide end of hostility" as Maier suggests.[44] Moreover, if Ephesians was written during the Flavian era as Maier presumes, a time when Nero had not long ago blamed the Christian community for the fire that burned Rome and antagonisms and persecutions against them would have increased after

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New Testament, ed. C. Clifton Black and Duane Frederick Watson, Studies in Rhetoric and Religion 8 [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008], 81–106).

[41] Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*, 107. He also states, "[W]hile the letter works with the cultural coin of reciprocity shared by benefactor and recipients in important aspects it revises traditional codes of benefaction. In the first place, Christ the benefactor offers his gifts without merit. Indeed, there is no way for the recipients to earn his benefaction…. Nor is God the benefactor obliged to continue acts of benefaction in return for honours. If Ephesians emphasizes anything, it is the sovereignty of a God who does not enter into negotiation with humans centred on obligation or a return for favours" (122).

[42] Maier writes, "The writer of Ephesians creates [an] imperial situation, to celebrate Christ's rule and its benefits of concord and civic harmony. …[I]ts contents portray a community living amidst the tensions that arise from multiple association – on the one hand, as Christ-followers who in the church have discovered new models of sociality, and on the other hand, as participants in the civil order" (ibid., 103).

[43] Ibid., 108–18, 122–37.

[44] Ibid., 124.

that,[45] then Maier's suggestion that it encourages "its listeners to imagine themselves as beneficiaries of imperial victory" would have made Paul appear strangely unsympathetic to his own community and their sufferings, and oddly supportive of the Caesars' Empire.[46] On this last point, one cannot help but enlist Wright's sharp rejection (of an earlier unidentified work) that aptly fits the situation: "[T]he argument recently advanced … that Ephesians and Colossians are secondary *because they move away from confrontation with the Empire to collaboration with it* is frankly absurd."[47] Thus, Elliott's and Carter's suggestions represent the accommodation position and Maier's proposal of "pacification of enemies" is astonishingly pro-Empire.[48] Although these three scholars contribute to arguments for the political and imperial background of Ephesians, they create new perspectives of Ephesians' purpose that are quite implausible to imagine.[49]

The works of Fantin, Wright, and Long provide important considerations for us to move towards a viable proposal regarding the ostensiveness of Paul's political critique in Ephesians. Fantin, as we have seen, identifies a polemic against Caesar through Paul's use of κύριος. He defines "polemic" as "*a communicative act that challenges and/or gives offense in the form of a challenge to another … a challenge of one party to another through a claim to a role held by the*

[45] Fantin suggests, "Nero's persecution in Rome (64 CE) probably increased the Christians' visibility. … There is a gradual increase in visibility of the church. The conflicts with Rome are due not to a new message but rather to the growing perception that Christians may be a threat" (*Lord of the Entire World*, 259).

[46] Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*, 122.

[47] Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, 19.

[48] Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*, 124.

[49] Maier concludes that Ephesians and Colossians "both … served to endorse a later empire that would unite Caesar and Christ" (ibid., 142).

other."[50] Fantin does not expressly state whether he thinks this polemic is hidden or explicit and allows for variation in its "directness and strength" in Paul's writings (as his analyses show).[51] However, the offensive nuance inherent in κύριος as a title renowned to refer to the highest ranking political leader of that era makes its use and the polemic overt, unambiguous, and not hidden. Thus, it may be said that Paul's use of κύριος is quite apparently counter-imperial against the Caesars. Although I am not in favor of Fantin's judgment that the challenge of εἷς κύριος in Eph 4:5 is weak,[52] his thesis enables this research to postulate that an explicit opposition against the Caesars is in view through Paul's repetitive uses of κύριος in Ephesians to honor Jesus Christ. Furthermore, regardless of the original recipients' responses to the discourse, the cumulative subversion of the Roman emperors contained in *all* of Paul's ostensive explicatures honoring Christ in Ephesians (identified and discussed in this work) could not and would not have gone unnoticed if they were ever read outside the church.[53]

In Wright's early assessment of Paul and Empire, he not only agrees that Paul's writings are counter-imperial and subversive to the Roman Empire, he also judges that Paul had evidently

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[50] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 9.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 231–34. I consider this an unfortunate and limited conclusion of his analysis of the occurrences of κύριος in Ephesians, i.e. of one instance of the word rather than all twenty-four times it is used throughout the whole of the discourse.

[53] Ibid., 259. Fantin comments, "[W]e cannot even be certain how the recipients would have responded. … [A]s visibility of the church increased, so did the potential for conflict. The polemic is unchanged; the more noticeable presence could have resulted in more potential for conflict. Also, as time progressed, a consistent lifestyle of Christians may have become more and more suspicious. … As the church put Paul's words in to practice, and as it grew and became more influential, increased resistance in a cognitive environment with Caesar as the supreme lord was natural. … We do not know what happened in the communities where Paul wrote, … it is wrong to suggest that the challenge went unanswered" (261).

purposed them that way.[54] He is convinced that the Caesars and the Roman Empire make up the immediate background and environment of Paul's world and influence Paul's mindset and theology.[55] They overshadow but do not negate the apostle's Jewish worldview and heritage, and the effects of other ancient philosophy and religions.[56] Wright argues that allusions to the Caesars in the Pauline letters are strong,[57] and although he is sensitive not to lean too much to either side of the subtle resistance-open opposition spectrum,[58] his conclusion about Paul's political critique of the Roman Empire tilts towards an apparent opposition:

> Even without embracing the various proposals currently on the table for reading Paul as a "counter-imperial" theologian, there is enough evidence to make a *prima facie* case, …

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[54] Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire," 161–62. Wright states: "[Paul's] missionary work must be conceived not simply in terms of a traveling evangelist offering people a new religious experience, but of an ambassador for a king-in-waiting, establishing cells of people loyal to this new king, and ordering their lives according to his story, his symbols, and his praxis, and their minds according to his truth. This could not but be construed as deeply counterimperial [*sic*], as subversive to the whole edifice of the Roman Empire; and there is in fact plenty of evidence that Paul intended it to be so construed" (161–62).

[55] Wright, "Gospel and Empire," 59–79; Wright, "Rome and the Challenge of Empire," 279–347; Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1271–1319.

[56] Wright's develops his view in conjunction with Paul's perspectives (1) on creation and covenant and (2) on Messiah and apocalyptic, and are crucial to rightly understand Paul and his views of the Roman Empire (*Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, 21–58).

[57] Wright states: "[I]f Paul does not mention Caesar by name, can he be taken to be alluding to him, and to his imperial world? As with political cartoons in the modern world…, it is dangerous to assume that readers would be unable to pick up allusions to the structures of power and those who embodied and enforced them. Often, in fact, such allusions are the only way, or perhaps the best way, to get the point across. But in the case of Paul, the echoes of imperial language (not necessarily explicitly 'cultic' language, though … the cult merges into, and flows out from, the wider ideology) are strong: 'good news', 'son of God', universal allegiance, Jesus as part of an ancient royal family and as *kyrios* ('lord'), and then, in what is generally reckoned the thematic statement of the letter [of Romans], this 'good news' as being the means of 'salvation' and 'justice' (*dikaiosynē*, 'righteousness'). The fact that these notions have been given very different, and essentially non-political, meanings in some Christian theology ought not to make us deaf to the echoes they would almost certainly have awakened in Rome" (Wright, "Paul and Empire (2010)," 446).

[58] Wright states, "[I]t is … possible that Paul, … was concerned … with *confrontation*, with the challenge to express his new-found … faith in Jesus as the crucified and risen Messiah within the polemical context necessitated by the new imperial reality" (ibid.). He is also quick to clarify, "Paul was … advocating something much more subtle than either a 'pro-Roman' or 'anti-Roman' stance as commonly imagined (not least, today, by those who hope he will be 'anti-Roman' in order that he may be 'anti-empire' in the way they want to be 'anti-empire')" (Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1298).

> that he saw the gospel of Jesus the Messiah as upstaging, outflanking, delegitimizing and generally subverting the 'gospel' of Caesar and Rome.[59]

Thus far, in giving specific attention to and analyzing the details of Paul's honorific discourse and explicatures honoring Christ in Ephesians, little has been mentioned about Paul's Jewish worldview and heritage that color his perspectives of his world and his theology. This does not mean they are unimportant. Conversely, and appropriately at this junction, Paul's background as a Jew, training and knowledge as a former Pharisee, and theology shaped by these past experiences, must be closely kept in view with respect to his critique of pagan empires, with the Roman Empire being the immediate and most paganistic one during his day. In this respect, Wright's work helpfully establishes an important foundation about Paul. Israel's history of being enslaved in Egypt and exiled in the former paganistic Babylonian, Persian, Assyrian and Greek empires, not to mention her failures and unfaithfulness as a nation, must have highly influenced Paul's view and approach to the Roman Empire, and even more so when he became a follower and apostle of Jesus the Messiah. Wright accurately perceives,

> What we are faced with throughout his writing … is the fact that he was opposed to paganism in all its shapes and forms; … with the settled and unshakeable conviction that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who was now revealed in and as Jesus of Nazareth, stood over against all other gods and goddesses, claiming unique allegiance. Paul, in other words, was not opposed to Caesar's empire primarily because it was an empire … but because it was Caesar's, and because Caesar was claiming divine status and honors which belonged only to the one God.[60]

In light of Wright's assessment, Paul's Jewish messianic and apocalyptic perspectives would have stirred him strongly to resist the Caesars' audacious claims to be gods and their

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[59] Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1305–6.

[60] Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire," 164.

expectations to be worshipped as such.[61] Recalling the fervent zeal of Saul of Tarsus displayed in his persecution of the earliest Christ movement when the message of Jesus Christ seemed totally at odds with his Pharisaic belief (Acts 7:58–8:3; 9:21), one cannot imagine that Paul the apostle could stand idly by and do nothing in the face of such blasphemous claims from the Caesars against the one true God of Israel and the Messiah Jesus.

Long also views Paul's "Jewish theological/political influence" as a critical component of Ephesians' "political dimension," which he surmises to be comprised of "a deep covenantal current related to the story of Israel now 'being summed up' under the headship of Jesus the Messiah."[62] In various parts of the discourse, Long sees that "in Christ Paul deliberately trumped the political understandings of large factions of his Jewish kinsfolk."[63]

This work began and progressed with the assumption that the majority of Ephesians' audience consisted of Gentile believers in Asia Minor, while the presence of Jewish believers would be considerably fewer. Given Paul's Jewish background, and his knowledge of the composition of his audience, his Ephesians discourse would conceivably follow a particular genre that the majority of his audience were familiar with (i.e. the honorific convention and its common function to legitimize the powers of the ruling class), and cater his explicatures

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[61] Wright, "Gospel and Empire," 69. Wright conceives, "His messianic theology hailed Jesus as King, Lord and Saviour, the one at whose name every knee would bow. His apocalyptic theology saw God unveiling his own saving justice in the death and resurrection of the Messiah. … [F]or Paul, Jesus is Lord and Caesar is not."

[62] Long, "Ephesians: Paul's Political Theology," 305. Long concludes, "the letter we call 'Ephesians' relied judiciously upon core covenantal Jewish theology…" (308).

[63] Ibid. Regarding this notion, Long explains, "Apparently, there was quite some animosity between Paul and the Asian Jewish community, such that these Asian Jews brought charges against Paul in Acts 21:27-28: he spoke against this people Israel, the law, and the temple and brought in a Greek to defile the temple. The letter of Ephesians appears to be Paul's reply to these charges, since Paul affirmed Christ's reconstitution of Israel's citizenry (2:12, 19), his annulling of the law (2:15a), and the construction of a holy temple featuring Jesus (2:20-22), thus affirming the co-equal status of Gentile believers as co-citizens, joint body members, co-household members, and co-recipients along with Jewish believers of the promise (of the covenants) in Christ (1:3; 2:12; 3:6)."

honoring Christ to efficiently trigger the ubiquitous honors of the Caesars in the Greco-Roman political-religious environment in which they would have instinctively heard and understood his efficacious message: a "trumping not only of Jewish political notions, but of Roman imperial ones."[64] Although the proposals of Elliott, Carter, and Maier promote the political and imperial context for Ephesians, the political positions of the apostle Paul that they offer are doubtful. Conversely, based on scholars like Fantin, Wright, and Long who have argued that Paul's response to the Roman Empire is counter-imperial and subversive, and in conjunction with this present argument that the subversion of the Caesars is a strong and efficacious implicature that Paul's audience would have derived effortlessly and satisfactorily, this work concludes that Paul's political critique in Ephesians is an apparent opposition to the Caesars and the Empire. This thesis has demonstrated that Ephesians' honorific discourse "drew heavily upon Hellenized political topoi and forms" and projected to its audience a message of the subversion of the Caesars with "dire implications for life dominated by Roman imperial politics."[65] More importantly, it has shown that Paul's message is "politically subversive."[66]

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[64] Ibid., 306. Long rightly assessed, "As an incarnational discourse (as I affirm for all of Scripture), it is critical to consider *how the words were written to address the original audiences and how those original audiences would have heard the words*." To this end, this research has aimed to demonstrate and achieved.

[65] Ibid., 308.

[66] Although Wright's political critique of Ephesians focuses only on a few pericopes of the letter (Wright, "Gospel and Empire," 76; Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1286–87)., his conclusion that the message of Ephesians is "politically subversive" adds to the strength of this work. Wright claims, "Ephesians holds out an astonishing vision of Jesus as the lord of the whole cosmos…. To invite people to worship the God who has been revealed in and through this Jesus cannot but be politically subversive. In fact, the coming together of Jews and gentiles into the single family of the Messiah (2.11-22) is to be the sign to the powers of the world that their time is up…. The cosmic battle against the spiritual forces of evil (6.10-17) does not exclude a struggle with early authorities (Ephesians, like Colossians, Philippians and Philemon, claims to be written from prison), but indicates their proper context" ("Paul and Empire (2010)," 449–50). Furthermore, his argument for Revelation as "a coded apocalyptic work … intended as a direct subversion of Rome and its blasphemous claims" sounds uncannily applicable for our epistle: "[L]ike Paul, Revelation never once names Rome explicitly. The signs are obvious…. But the word 'Rome' does not appear. And Revelation … never cites scripture explicitly; there are no quotation-formulae, no references to 'as it says in the prophet Isaiah'. But the book is soaked in Israel's scriptures from start to

Relevance of Other Proposed Contexts

In light of our conclusion, some proposed contexts offered could be reviewed in terms of the strength of their implicatures and their relevance for the discourse. Our conclusion has been consistently based on RT's *communicative principle* defined in ch. 1: "Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance."[67] According to the *relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure* (RTCP), interpreters "Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses … in order of accessibility."[68] This is where RT allows that an explicature may have other potential ad-hoc concepts that might require more or less processing effort and implicatures that might produce stronger or weaker contextual effect. Tim Meadowcroft describes it well:

> For the relevance theoretician, a strong implicature is that achieved by a minimum of processing effort with a maximum contextual effect. However, this does not deny the existence of further weaker implicatures that are intended, at least to the extent that they are inherent in the text, and that may be picked up by the reader; indeed are picked up by the reader. They are achieved as a result of further processing effort on the part of the reader during which contextual effects are encountered.[69]

Fantin's work also reflects RT's ability to accommodate a range of implicature strengths when he considers that in Eph 4:5: "any anti-imperial polemical pragmatic effect … is likely weak."[70]

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finish, and it makes excellent sense to study these quotations and allusions as such" (Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1317).

[67] Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance*, 156–58; Wilson and Sperber, "Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 612; Meadowcroft, "Relevance as a Mediating Category," 622. See pp. 24–28 for explanation of RT's principles of relevance.

[68] Wilson and Sperber, "Relevance Theory," ed. Horn and Ward, 613–15. See p. 35 n. 128 in ch. 1 regarding the description of RTCP.

[69] Meadowcroft, "Relevance as a Mediating Category," 624.

[70] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 233.

Thus, it is possible to judge the relevance of existing proposed contexts according to the strengths of their implicatures, i.e. how much more or less processing effort might the addressees of Ephesians need to expense and how much more or less contextual effect would they gain as a result. As such, this research judges that if the audience needs to exert more effort but only to gain less context effect, the implicature and the relevance of the corresponding context are weak. Alternatively, if the implicature and relevance of a certain context are strong but the examined explicatures only comprise a small percentage of the entire discourse, the context can only be considered relevant for those parts of the discourse but not the whole.

Arnold's proposal may be considered relevant *only* for words denoting "power" in Ephesians. His appeal to the widespread practice of magic and of the Artemis cults may be justified. However, the power language in Ephesians is only a limited selection of all the explicatures found in Ephesians as scholars have pointed out.[71] As such, the relevance of the spiritual powers background could not be applied to the whole discourse. Moreover, various scholars have also argued against Arnold's interpretation of the "powers." Wink and Long have argued strongly that human rulers and powers are in view in these "power" explicatures especially in Paul's use of ἀρχή and ἐξουσία.[72] Wright also explains the "*identity* of the 'rulers'" with regards to Eph 1:20–23 and Col 1:15–18,

> They clearly *include* all human authorities, from Caesar on his throne, giving himself "divine" status, right down to the lowliest local administrator. But precisely by including them in a much larger array of "powers" this way of speaking thereby *relativizes* all such rulers. "Every name that is invoked" [Eph 1:21]: in eastern Asia Minor there was one name in particular that was invoked in Paul's day, and he knew it and so did his readers. … [B]y implicitly placing Caesar within a long list of other types of ruler and power Paul is demoting him, cutting him down to size. He is one among many. … [T]his was itself a

[71] Muddiman, *Epistle*, 15. See also Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 101.

[72] Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 13; Long, "Roman Imperial Rule," 125–27.

> polemical point. In a world where statutes and coins dressed him up as Zeus, Poseidon or some other lofty Olympian, to place Caesar by implication as one among many was already a calculated snub.[73]

Similarly, Ernst R. Wendland acknowledges that the power terms in Ephesians have "either a literal or a figurative reference to the concept of some personal or personalized potency, whether *human*, divine, angelic, or demonic" (emphasis mine) and that ἀρχαι could possibly refer to human authority.[74]

Arnold takes into account neither the distinct honorific features of the discourse that would have inclined the readers towards identifying and processing its honor/dishonor motif, nor the voluminous, amplified and strategically located explicatures of Christ throughout the epistle that would have triggered comparisons with concepts of the Caesars. As a result, according to RT principles, spiritual powers and Arnold's proposal of a spiritual powers and magical practices setting are only partially relevant for the power terminologies and not the whole discourse.

A number of scholars have examined the use of the OT in Ephesians and proposed various contexts. Thorsten Moritz has done an extensive study of the important OT quotations, allusions and concepts in Ephesians to propose that a part of its context could be a religious setting entrenched in the Moses tradition and Torah heritage.[75] Harris focuses instead on "rabbinic interpretations of Psalm 68 that lie behind … Eph 4:8," that also refers to the Moses tradition as interpretive background.[76] While Moritz's and Harris' proposals are supported by elaborate examinations of these quotations' OT usages, they are nonetheless applicable only to

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[73] Wright, "Paul in Caesar's Empire," 1286.

[74] Wendland, "Contextualizing the Potentates," 199, 200.

[75] Moritz, *Profound Mystery*, 218.

[76] Harris, *Descent of Christ*, xv.

the few verses in Ephesians that have supposedly employed these intertextual OT materials and occupy only a small percentage of the whole discourse. In addition, since not all of these OT materials are direct quotations, and some of them have also been altered to suit the author's purpose in the discourse, like Ps 68:18 in Eph 4:8, the chances of the Gentile audience identifying them as taken from the OT also decreases substantially.

R. T. France observes at least ten instances of "formula-quotations" in Matthew's gospel as "patterns of fulfillment" regarding the Messiah where he proposes the evangelist "was sometimes willing to modify the wording of the [OT] text in order to draw out more clearly for his readers the sense in which he perceived it to have been fulfilled by Jesus."[77] Paul's way of using and altering certain parts of his OT sources in Ephesians might appear similar to Matthew. It might even suggest that his Gentile audience might be able to understand the OT contexts of his quotations and allusions. Although there might be some in the mainly Gentile audience(s) who could have access to or knowledge of these OT Vorlage and concepts, one has to judge what they might do *more instinctively* if they were confronted with the text's strong honorific emphasis and clear honorific genre. Would they be more likely to trigger first these OT concepts in the few instances they were quoted/alluded or activate other more efficient Greco-Roman political-religious concepts of the Caesars throughout the discourse? Would they be more likely to expend first more processing effort to understand the OT concepts before they could gain the contextual effects according to the way Moritz and Harris explain/propose or be satisfied with the efficacious effects of the subversion of the Caesars? As a result, Moritz's and Harris' suggestions are considered weaker implicatures and weaker in relevance as far as the Gentile

[77] R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 12–13; see also R. T. France, "The Formula-Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication," *NTS* 27.2 (1981): 233–51.

audience(s) are concerned, and are unable to attend to the whole discourse. Therefore, although an OT/Jewish context is possible for Ephesians because of Paul's Jewish background, it is not deemed to be optimally relevant for the majority of his Gentile audience(s) based on the application of RT in the discourse. This is not a rejection of the plausibility of the OT/Jewish context; rather it is purely a judgment based on the considerations of efficiency and efficacy guided by RT.

Gombis' and Cozart's proposals, although covering most of the epistle and emphasizing "victory of God in Christ" and triumphalism themes, are dependent on OT imagery of divine warfare in Exodus and ideology regarding triumphs from Isaiah.[78] Thus, despite being close to this research's proposed implicature of the subversion of the Caesars, they do not specify the Roman imperial rulers as the ones who were supplanted. As such, their contextual effects are not as efficacious as this work for the encouragement of the early believers and their implicatures and relevance are weaker since the Gentile audiences would still need to retrieve a substantial amount of OT knowledge, resulting in greater processing efforts.

Finally, Julien Smith argues for the characterization of Christ as "a type of ideal king" in ways similar to Greco-Roman and Jewish thoughts.[79] Smith's thesis and supporting arguments bear some resemblance to this research and could potentially measure reasonably well in relevance. He reviews a good number of Greco-Roman primary sources spanning over six hundred years of history from 490 BC–AD 117 covering the Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman periods and Jewish literatures from different locales like Palestine, Egypt, and Rome for their

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[78] Gombis, *The Drama of Ephesians*, 19, 28; Cozart, *This Present Triumph*, 4–21, 27–70, 264.

[79] Smith, *Christ the Ideal King*, 3. Smith states, "in Ephesians, Christ is characterized as a type of ideal king. Such a portrayal of Christ would have resonated with a constellation of cultural expectations held by the letter's authorial audience, thereby ensuring comprehension of the letter's argument and purpose."

perspectives of ideal kingship.[80] From this impressive collection, Smith draws six strands of parallels between them and the descriptions of Christ in Ephesians,[81] most notably and primarily Christ as God's vicegerent, "the agent of God's blessing to the church, the ultimate aim of which is nothing less than the restoration of divine harmony to the cosmos."[82] Smith also identifies Christ as, 1) the one who reconciles humanity to God and between Jew and Gentile (2:1–22); 2) the benefactor of the church (4:1–16); 3) the one who effects "moral transformation in the church" by abolishing vice (4:17–5:21); 4) the one who establishes harmony in the household "as a microcosm of the church rather than the state" (5:22–6:0); and 5) the one who secures "victory over the powers" like a military victor (6:10–20).[83] These six roles of Christ have been duly identified and discussed in this research as honorific concepts of Christ triggered by Paul's explicatures. Moreover, the honors of the Caesars are also demonstrated to be relevant ad-hoc concepts to them. As such, Smith's categories are also strong in relevance to Paul's audiences.

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[80] Ibid., 19–173. Smith summarizes in Greco-Roman thought: the ideal king as "without equal in virtue" (87); "benefactor of humankind" (87); "imitates divine virtue and bestows these virtues magnanimously upon his people" (87); "a living law" (87); "possess the law within himself" (87–88); "rules as vicegerent of the gods, often appointed to rule by the high god himself, Zeus or Jupiter. In Greco-Roman thought, the king always enjoyed a close connection to the divine. … The Hellenistic and Roman ruler cults honored kings and emperors with divine status, at least partially, in recognition of the divine virtues they possessed and were able to convey. Virgil speaks of Augustus as the son of a god and Seneca of Nero as the vicegerent of the gods" (88); and "brings peace and establishes harmony within his realm" (88). In Jewish thought, Smith summarizes: "In at least one significant respect … these Jewish texts differ from their Greco-Roman analogues: they are loathe to ascribe divinity to the king. … Jewish writers are on the whole more circumspect in conceptualizing the relationship between the king and God. … Such a synthesis yields a picture of an ideal king who rules as Yahweh's vicegerent, reflects and transmits God's glory, effects a return to righteousness, and inaugurates a golden age of peace and harmony" (171); "The ideal king is the vicegerent of Yahweh, the cosmic king" (171); "reflects divine glory" (172); "a benefactor who transmits divine blessings to humanity" (172); "rules righteously, and effects a return to righteousness" (172); "inculcate virtue in his subjects" (172); and "establishes a golden age of peace" (172).

[81] Ibid., 174–242.

[82] Ibid., 175. Smith discusses at length the progressive uses of ὁ Χριστὸς as a Messianic Title/Proper Name for Christ and of the force of the prepositional phrase ἐν Χριστῷ through Ephesians (174–207) to demonstrate "what emerges is a portrait of the Christ as an ideal king who acts as God's agent to reconcile the cosmos" (207).

[83] Ibid., 207–42.

However, I find Smith's proposal problematic in a few areas. First, Smith fails to recognize the strong similarity between the political-religious concepts of the Caesars with the explicatures of Christ in Ephesians. In as much as he has researched so extensively the Greco-Roman thoughts of ideal kinship of which the Caesars were the living models and cited them as evidences, he does not think they might actually be the ones directly implicated by Paul's explicatures about Christ to produce many comparisons between them. Second, although Smith rightly identifies Christ is a benefactor, he limits his benefactions within Eph 4:1–16 in which Christ is the one Lord and the giver of gifts.[84] He has completely bypassed the specific accountings of Christ's achievements in 2:11–22 that ostensibly explicates Christ's role as the Great Benefactor. Third, he determines 2:1–3:13 as a digression in his "poetic sequence" of Ephesians.[85] This is dubious considering the prominent roles of 2:8–10 as the *partitio* of our honorific discourse and of 2:11–22 that explicitly details Christ's benefactions for humanity. Fourth, Smith simply refuses to concede that Ephesians could possess and express a political message and purpose. Unbeknownst to the reader throughout his thesis, Smith remarkably states at the very end of his monograph, "Ephesians appropriates political language but adapts it to a non-political end.… Indeed, whatever the political ramifications of the letter may be, they are not spelled out within the letter itself.… The letter is simply not concerned with how one relates to the Roman empire."[86] Smith further asserts,

> Rome took up royal ideology and applied it to the emperor. The author of Ephesians takes the same ideology and applies it, *mutatis mutandi*, to Christ. The fact that two masons use the same tools and materials gives no indication of the type of structure they

[84] Ibid., 217–21.

[85] Ibid., 204. This results from Smith's attempt to determine the "referential sequence of action" in the "narrative world" of Ephesians (195–203).

[86] Ibid., 253.

> are building. One cannot infer from Ephesians' use of the conceptual framework of royal ideology anything about whether the letter implies a critique of Rome. The polemical nature of a text must be demonstrated by its argument rather than asserted because of an assumed "hidden transcript."[87]

Smith's insistence that Ephesians bears no trace of political critique is surprising, especially since he appeals to such a vast collection of sources concerning royal kingship identities and at various parts of his argument establishes the text's associations with imperial propaganda and socio-political ideologies. For example, Smith claims Christ's role of vicegerency is a "political order."[88] Regarding Christ's role in reconciling the cosmos, Smith states, "It must be observed, finally, that although Ephesians resonates with Imperial propaganda that proclaimed the *Pax Romana* to a golden age of peace, the letter's perspective upon that which constitutes authentic peace provides an implicit critique of this propaganda."[89] On Christ's benefactor role, Smith affirms,

> Roman imperial ideology adapted the Greek concept of the king as divine benefactor, emphasizing the benefits themselves that only the emperor was divinely empowered to confer. During the Roman period, the depiction of the ideal king or emperor as the universal benefactor of humankind was ubiquitous.[90]

However, despite establishing these associations with the Roman imperial setting, Smith would surprisingly reject the letter's political agenda and critique against the Empire that various scholars have already demonstrated.

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[87] Ibid., 254.

[88] Ibid., 206.

[89] Smith, *Christ the Ideal King*, 216–17. Smith also suggests, "That the author of Ephesians may be thinking in socio-political terms is suggested by his mode of expression: previously the gentiles were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel (τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, 2:12); now they are fellow-citizens (συμπολῖται) with the saints (2:19)" (215).

[90] Ibid., 218–19.

In response, this work has demonstrated that the "conceptual framework" pairing the ideologies of the Caesars with that of Christ is not coincidental.[91] The concepts of Christ and of the Caesars proposed by this research are established on the similar language and genre of honorific documents that commonly functioned to legitimize the power and authority of the rulers. The two key figures were both "lords," "saviors," "benefactors," and "heads" to their respective bodies, and "viceroys" and "sons" to their respective deities. The political purpose of this honorific medium augments the resemblances in concepts between Christ and the Caesars such that the audience could retrieve the implicit critique within Ephesians efficiently and efficaciously. The subversive polemic against the Caesars and the Roman Empire within the text is indeed demonstrated to be an apparent opposition.

Thus, according to RT's principles of relevance, existing proposals of Ephesians' context fail either to apply to the whole discourse or to meet the dual criteria of efficiency and efficacy in optimal relevance to be the SCE of Ephesians. However, this does not mean they are wrong or should be rejected. This research judges that these proposals are weaker in relevance, less efficient, and less efficacious for the mainly Gentile audience in western Asia Minor than its conclusion of a Greco-Roman political-religious environment. To a minority of the whole audience, a few of these proposals may be stronger in relevance than to others. For example, the Jews would be familiar with the OT concepts and thus they might activate them more efficiently and process them more efficaciously than the majority who are Gentiles. On the other hand, this work's conclusion could serve as a magnifying device, a sort of microscope or binoculars, that enables the audience to associate the discourse's explicatures to some of these other more

[91] It is not "parallelomania" nor "the uncritical citation and imposition of historical parallels" (Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 1–13; Bauer and Traina, *Inductive Bible Study*, 258).

specific concepts or retrieve some of the more localized contextual effects scholars proposed. In that way, this conclusion has the capacity to encompass these proposed contexts instead of rejecting them.

On a different note, Wendland published an article combining the use of RT with his research on the translation and contextualization of Ephesians.[92] In it, Wendland advocates the same interpretation as Arnold that Ephesians' "power" language refers to wicked spiritual powers and uses it as his assumption to propose,

> [T]he apostle's apparent strategy of "contextualisation", that is, how he seemingly shared and adapted his theological and ethical content to suit the circumstances of its reception … as a model both for better understanding the import of the text as written and also for contextualising in turn its essential message in other cultural settings and religious situations of the world, for example, the various peoples of southern Africa.[93]

On the whole, Wendland's use of RT is much like Ernst-August Gutt's, i.e. in the field of Bible translation, and does not examine or reconstruct the cognitive environment of Ephesians.[94] This translational application of RT has a set of criteria and assumptions that is completely different from this research in employing it to reconstruct the context of Ephesians.[95] As a result, Wendland's application of RT is incompatible for comparison with mine. Thus, whether in comparing the relevance of a proposed setting or the use of RT for the whole discourse, no work has attempted to resolve the context of Ephesians as this research has done.

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[92] Wendland, "Contextualizing the Potentates," 199–223.

[93] Ibid., 203.

[94] Wendland, *Finding and Translating*; Gutt, *Relevance Theory*; Gutt, *Translation and Relevance*.

[95] Wendland, *Finding and Translating*, 4–52.

The Shared Cognitive Environment

In summary, I believe the evidences available in the text, when interpreted pragmatically and not just semantically, could shed new light on Paul's *informative* and *communicative intents* for writing the epistle to the Ephesians. The presence of features commonly found in honorific inscriptions and documents enable us to classify Ephesians as an epistolary honorific discourse. While God and Christ are the major honorands praised, the explicatures of Christ are found to be voluminous, dense, amplified and strategically located. Much more importantly, these explicatures honor Christ in his roles, benefactions, profile and authority in such a way as to efficiently trigger the honors of the Caesars as historically available ad-hoc concepts and efficaciously implicate Christ's subversion over them. The efficiency and efficacy of activating the Caesars' honors to process Christ's honors mean they are optimally relevant for interpreting the latter and satisfy the audience's search for meaning and understanding, not only on the immediate and explicit front, but also as productive implicatures at the cognitive level. The evidences presented in this work demonstrate that Paul intends to honor Christ in very explicit and honorific ways, and through them, it is *historical plausibility* that he purposes to subvert the Caesars. Fantin's assertion that Paul's use of κύριος is an "explicit and not subtle" polemic against Caesar strengthens this work's conclusion that Paul's numerous explicatures of Christ in Ephesians, including and especially of κύριος, are more probably explicit supplanting of the Caesars.[96] Thus, the Greco-Roman political-religious environment that supplies these honorific

[96] Fantin, *Lord of the Entire World*, 261. He states, "By reconstructing relevant aspects of the first-century world based on extant evidence, I have been able to argue that a challenge was likely part of the original intended message. It was explicit and not subtle."

concepts of the Caesars is demonstrated to be the optimally relevant shared cognitive environment of Paul and his audience, and maintained as the context of the Ephesian discourse.

The responses of Paul's original Ephesians audiences to his discourse would have given us clues to better estimate Paul's possible intents for his letter to them; but these are unavailable to us. Despite this, Fantin suggests,

> Based on our reconstruction of the cognitive environment, it is likely that, if the letters were read by outsiders, they would have perceived a challenge and may have viewed it as offensive. However, it is more likely that any contact with Paul's teaching would have been through the lives of the readers. In light of the relationship between Paul and his recipients as seen in the letters, it seems likely that the readers would have followed his instruction…. It is also possible that an initial polemic may have been felt only by the original readers. Consequences and resistance would follow, but they may or may not have been immediate.[97]

Harry O. Maier also concludes,

> The Pauline corpus in general,… rely upon a shared set of common experiences, not only of personal encounters, but also of socio-cultural reality. As Paul seeks to make 'the facts evident' by placing topics before his listeners' eyes, it is the recurring world of imperial imagery that forms the visual arena he can rely upon as the resource of the imagination to assure his listeners draw the lessons he wishes them to understand and believe. Paul often draws from the visual world of imperial metaphor and imagery because it is that world he shares with his listeners and which furnishes both writer and listener with a set of predictable outcomes.… In other words, Paul's creativity lies in his ability to draw on ready-made images and syntax and to revise them so as to create new ideals and associations consistent with his Gospel. Both the uncontested and contested letters attest to the negotiation of their imperial visual world as a means of persuasion.[98]

In a novel fashion, Brian J. Walsh and Sylvia C. Keesmaat imagine a conversation between Nympha mentioned in Paul's farewell remarks in Col 4:15, and Lydia mentioned in Acts 16:14–15. Nympha, supposedly a respected benefactor, meets the new convert Lydia who begins sharing with her all about Jesus. Walsh and Keesmaat vividly narrate how Lydia's

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[97] Ibid., 259.

[98] Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire*, 31.

explicit portrayals of Jesus Christ's titles, deeds, benefactions, suffering, death and resurrection to the supreme position of authority at the right hand of God, would trigger immediately and efficiently in Nympha's mind knowledge of the Caesars and that also simultaneously produce the resultant efficacious implicature that they were not who they claimed to be.[99] This is exemplified in Nympha's response to Lydia,

> Why would you risk all that for the worship of this Jesus? Think of what could happen. Why, if someone unsympathetic heard you they might think you were suggesting that Caesar isn't our lord and savior. They might think you didn't appreciate the peace and prosperity that Rome has brought. Don't you see the kind of trouble you could get into with this way of thinking?[100]

In this story, cast in the historical first-century world in Asia Minor, Nympha's ability to immediately associate Lydia's portrayals of Jesus Christ with the Caesars and to conclude that they implicate the latter's subversion is entrenched in the ubiquitous images and proclamations of the Caesars found on coins, statues, gates, temples and products, and the pervasive implementation of emperor worship through the imperial cult all around her. Although Nympha was supposedly a representative from the Church in Colossae, her response could easily be that of any inhabitants of the Asia Minor region, including the recipients of Ephesians. Walsh and Keesmaat have demonstrated this thesis's proposal that the explicatures honoring Jesus Christ activate relevant political-religious honors of the Roman emperors that implicate the subversion of the Caesars. Despite not employing RT, they have exemplified its principles of relevance. Thereby though it is not their expressed goal, they have recreated the plausible SCE of Nympha

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[99] Brian J. Walsh and Sylvia C. Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2004), 49–57.

[100] Ibid., 52.

and Lydia that enabled Nympha to instinctively understand the implications of Lydia's explicit and ostensive testimony of Jesus Christ.

Thus, in conclusion the reconstruction of Ephesians' shared cognitive environment is completed. The Greco-Roman political-religious environment is shown to be the SCE between Paul and the audience of Ephesians because it is the environment that supplies the political-religious concepts of the Caesars that in turn are efficiently triggered by Paul's explicatures honoring Christ and efficaciously implicate their subversion by Christ. These concepts of the Caesars were historically available to Paul and his audience and the efficacious implicature derived from the ad-hoc concepts is also historically plausible. Judging from the high degree at which the testing criteria have been met and the complete and successful reconstruction of the SCE through the use of RT in this research, it is finally maintained that the Greco-Roman political-religious environment is the context relevant for the interpretation of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

This research began with the aim to reconstruct the context of the epistle to the Ephesians. It uses a cognitive-linguistic theory proposed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson called Relevance Theory (RT) that has been employed by biblical scholars like Gene Green, Stephen Pattemore and Joseph Fantin to guide their reconstructive works. No one to this date has undertaken to use RT in such a thoroughgoing examination of the whole discourse of Ephesians. The reconstruction process of RT identifies the *ad-hoc concepts* that (1) are *efficiently* activated by important explicatures found in the discourse, and (2) produce *efficacious* cognitive effects upon the readers; these together thus help the interpreter locate the environment that could supply these concepts of relevance. The environment found is proposed to be the *optimally relevant shared cognitive environment* between the author and the audience and that would then adequately function as the context of the epistle. In order to measure its analyses of the discourse explicatures, formation of ad-hoc concepts, and the implicature, a set of testing criteria adapted from both Richard Hays' and Fredrick Long's is used. They comprise: *volume and repetition*, *density*, *amplification*, *strategic location*, *historical availability*, *relevance and satisfaction*, and *historical plausibility*.

This research first argues that Ephesians exhibits honorific features that identify it as an epistolary honorific discourse. A distinct honorific structure, voluminous amounts of honorific words and concepts, and thematic "word-deed" patterns commonly found in first-century

honorific documents like inscriptions and decrees are used in Ephesians. These features comport with the claims of Frederick Danker, Holland Hendrix, Fredrick Long, and Harry Maier but are however not observed or explicated by them in a thorough fashion as this work has done. A clear motif of honor/dishonor can be traced throughout the letter and a schema of this honorific discourse is offered. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are its honorands. God is the Supreme Benefactor while Jesus Christ is the Great Benefactor.

Focusing on the explicatures of Jesus Christ, this work demonstrates that they are voluminous and repetitive, dense, amplified, and strategically located in the discourse. These explicatures honor Christ in the aspects of his functions, positions, achievements, purposes, prerogatives, and titles. They are further found to manifest Christ's benefactions, authority, and honorific roles and profile as the Great Benefactor to all his believers. These explicatures honoring Christ correspond to the ways the first-century Caesars were honored, particularly the ones during Paul's lifetime. The similarities between the honors of Christ and of the Caesars include the uses of parallel metaphors (like "head"), ideologies (like positions of authority), and identical titles (like "lord," "savior," "son of God"). Because of the ubiquity of their honors through epigraphic and numismatic evidences, statues, monuments, buildings, imperial cults, temples etc. evidenced by the works of scholars like S. R. F. Price, Paul Zanker, Michael Peppard and Bruce Winter, the Caesars were constantly in the minds of the people. Moreover, they were honored as great political benefactors and received divine honors. Therefore, according to RT, they would be *efficiently* triggered as the *optimally relevant ad-hoc concepts* of the explicatures honoring Christ. The same criteria fulfilled by the explicatures of Christ are also met by these ad-hoc concepts of the Caesars. Thus, these latter concepts are also voluminous and

repetitive, dense, amplified and strategically located throughout the discourse, and are *historically available* to Paul and his audience.

Furthermore, these concepts also produce the *optimally relevant* and *efficacious* implicature of Christ's subversion of the Caesars. Contrary to first-century honorific inscriptions and decrees that functioned to legitimize the rule and power of the elite, especially the Caesars, to control their vast geographical empire, Paul's purpose for his honorific discourse to the Ephesians appears to demote their powers and delegitimize their rule by explicitly honoring Christ in ways that closely resemble their claims. This implicature of the subversion of the Caesars is increasingly proposed by scholars such as N. T. Wright and Fredrick Long and it is *historically plausible* that Paul would have intended for his audiences to encourage them to live holy and worthy lives in honorable response to the benefactions they received. This research also proposes that this implicature is an apparent opposition to the Caesars and the Roman Empire.

Finally, the efficiency and efficacy of the ad-hoc concepts of the Caesars lead to the conclusion that these concepts fulfill the most important criteria of *relevance and satisfaction*. Thus, based on RT and its principles of relevance, the Greco-Roman political-religious environment that supplies these efficient and efficacious concepts of the Caesars is the *shared cognitive environment* (SCE). This SCE is optimally relevant for the interpretation of Ephesians' honorific discourse, particularly its explicatures honoring Christ, compared to many existing proposed contexts that are weaker in their implicatures and relevance. It is also suggested that this SCE is able to incorporate other existing proposals such that they are not conceptually flawed but possibly contingent upon the Greco-Roman political-religious environment.

Returning to the very beginning, this research reiterates the importance of combining semantics and pragmatics in the interpretation of a biblical discourse. In particular, the

identification and reconstruction of a text's context cannot solely depend on the lexical semantics of its words and phrases. This researcher anticipates further applications and explorations of using pragmatics and RT in biblical interpretation.

Significance and Future Research

In terms of significance, the major contributions of this research are twofold. First, it lists and identifies the honorific features of Ephesians that support the proposal to interpret it as an epistolary honorific discourse. Explication of these features, particularly the honorific words and content and thematic "word-deed" patterns, has not yet been done thoroughly to this degree. This work's presentation of these features is thus its original effort and concretizes the claim that Ephesians is at home in the honorific genre.

Second, this work's usage of RT to examine the whole discourse of Ephesians is also the first of its kind. While RT has been used in Bible translation and in examining other biblical texts, no one has employed it for the interpretation of Ephesians or the whole of the letter before. In that regard, this work establishes a fresh trail for methodological and exegetical investigation of Ephesians and offers new perspectives in support of an opposing political critique of the Roman Empire in the epistle.

In terms of future explorations, this research could serve as 1) a reference for further research and exegesis of Ephesians and 2) a fresh example for the application of RT to the investigation of biblical materials and the reconstruction of a text's context. With respect to the research and exegesis of Ephesians, first, this work's use of RT to measure *relevance and satisfaction* could function as a benchmark for further assessments of proposals of Ephesians' context with the hope of moving closer towards a resolution of their differing views. In ch. 5, I

offer only a brief evaluation of the relevance of various contexts proposed but this analysis and comparison could well be done more extensively. Desirably, and with more time, more could be done to identify where various proposals overlap and how they might relate and influence each other. The interactions and connections between these proposals could be arranged in layers in order of their relevance to the discourse so that readers could envision their effects. This could enhance Ephesians scholarship towards greater unity to overcome the division and stalemate that exists currently. Second, this work and its conclusion about Ephesians' context, if further supported by other research and methods, could greatly influence scholarly views of the theology of Ephesians and interpretive methods applied on it. Third, this research could help to elucidate and potentially resolve the other difficult problems of Ephesians, beginning with its authenticity and audience as priority issues. Progressively, the discourse's purpose, provenance, and occasion of writing could also be determined.

This research has also demonstrated the effectiveness and use of RT for biblical interpretation and adds to the list of interpreters employing RT for biblical scholarship. If the reconstruction process offered in this thesis is found acceptable, it could be implemented for other discourses similar to Ephesians. This researcher's hope is that RT could be employed in the study of more biblical literature generally, beginning with other Pauline letters and the NT.

Finally, a number of areas profitable for further research are worth highlighting again. Of particular interest to me is the language of grandeur and excesses. Having done preliminary research on the quantitative emphasis in the NT and the use of πᾶς in Ephesians in an advanced Greek seminar, I intend to analyze more thoroughly these two aspects with the hope that they could increase modern readers' appreciation for biblical authors' intentional and emphatic uses of words denoting quantity for efficacious communication of their contents and messages. As

mentioned earlier, it would be beneficial to explore the functions of Jewish berakoths in the intertestamental period to counter pagan eulogies and as a form of rhetoric in consonant with political discourses. This would be an area for further research that would further advance the argument of this research and Christ's honorific role in 1:3–14. The continuity/discontinuity of the "one new humanity" in 2:15 with the status of Israel in Rom 9–11 could also be further explored. The new insights to be gained from this research about Paul's concept of the church as "one new humanity" could add to the discussion concerning Paul's view of Israel's redemption in relation to the church.

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